A JEWISH VIEW OF JESUS

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A JEWISH VIEW OF JESUS

THE JEWISH INTEREST OF JESUS

A STUDY of the relation of Jesus to the Jews, from the Jewish point of view, is still a somewhat hazardous undertaking, exciting suspicion or fear of one kind or another. Orthodox Christians will suspect an element of irreverence in a Jew's treatment of Jesus. The old-fashioned Jew, on the other hand, may object altogether to such a discussion, as giving undue attention to a forbidden subject. Consideration of Jesus on the part of a Jew is regarded as a sign of weakness, if not disloyalty, as a leaning in the wrong direction, particularly if it shows symptoms of admiration for Jesus.

Suspicion and prejudice, however, should not keep us aloof from a subject, which, as

a matter of fact, is of vital interest to the modern Jew. Until the nineteenth century, Jews, for various reasons, maintained silence in regard to Jesus. One reason, no doubt, was that it was not safe for them to discuss him. Jews were denied political rights in the Western world, and, by implication, the privilege of free comment on the dominant religion and its chief hero. Whenever they broke the rule of silence — even when forced into religious disputations — they had to pay a heavy penalty.

A unique exception was "The Fortification of Faith," a Hebrew work issued in the year 1593 by Isaac of Troki, a Karaite. It contains a defense of Judaism and a criticism of Christian dogmas, and it resulted from the author's friendly intercourse with Christians of all schools, trinitarians as well as unitarians, the latter having just then found shelter in Poland from the persecutions of other countries. A Latin translation of this

work, published by a German scholar in 1681, under the title of "Satan's Fiery Arrows," introduced it to the Christian world and made it popular with eighteenth-century skeptics, Voltaire remarking that it contained all the difficulties which latter-day unbelievers had propagated.

This book, however, sprang from unusually favorable circumstances. As a rule, Jews were silent on the subject of Jesus. Besides, as long as they lived apart, it was of no particular moment whether they had any clear idea of Jesus, or no.

Nowadays the situation is different. The Jews are free, civilly as well as intellectually. They live in close contact with the rest of the world; they read the same books, they hear the same lectures, they breathe the same atmosphere. It is, therefore, impossible for them to ignore a subject which is part of the very fabric of the life round about them. Moreover, in venturing to express his views

on this subject, the Jew has no more serious obstacle to face than custom or prejudice.

There are many reasons why a Jew should be interested in Jesus.

First of all, Jesus has become the most popular, the most studied, the most influential figure in the religious history of mankind. This alone should be enough to compel the Jew's attention.

The Jew is a religious being. All Jewish history is the result of religious passion and purpose, and, whatever is said to the contrary, the continuity of the Jew is bound up with the retention of his religion. Wipe out the religious element from the equation of his life, and the Jew would cease automatically. It is just because the Jew is so wholly bound up with his religion, that he can tolerate, or digest, all the indifference and atheism found in his midst. They are a foreign substance not strong enough to affect the general character and endurance of

his people. Had the Jewish religion been obliterated, for example, when Christianity arose, there would be no Jews to-day — no Jews of any kind. Religion belongs to the Jewish substance; all the rest is accident.

As a religious being, however, the Jew cannot help taking an interest in the man who above all others has played a part in religious history — at least in so far as the latter has touched the Western world. There may be more Mohametans and Hindus in the world than Christians and Jews. But no Mohametan prophet nor Hindu saint has exercised the same sway on the heart and imagination of the world as Jesus. Whether we like it or no, Jesus has fascinated mankind. Even in circles which have discarded Christian dogmas and creeds, Jesus has preserved his influence. Indeed, in many cases admiration for Jesus has grown in proportion to the abandonment of the dogmas of traditional Christianity.

This is illustrated by the large number of lives of Jesus that have appeared in recent years. In the second half of the nineteenth century, we know, there were many attacks upon traditional religion. Criticism of every kind, historical and philosophical, was directed against it. Many thought that the fortress of faith could not possibly endure. One thing, however, is remarkable. Amid all these assaults, the world kept on studying Jesus, and regarding him from every conceivable angle. New biographies of Jesus were produced from most diverse points of view: from the physiological, the psychological, and the pathological point of view, as well as from the orthodox. When, several years ago, the theory was revived that Jesus never existed — that he was a myth — it only served as an incentive to the production of new biographies of Jesus.

The creation of this literature is not confined to specialists or theologians. Jesus

has continued to occupy the pen of literary authors, who have approached him from the human end, rather than as theological students. Recently, we have been given, for instance, Mary Austin's book on Jesus, George Moore's novel, "The Brook Kerith," Mr. Masefield's poem, "Good Friday," and Mr. Shaw's brilliant dissertation in his Preface to "Androcles and the Lion." These instances show how fascinating and fecund a theme the life of Jesus offers to modern students and poets.

Now, it would be foolish for any one to affirm that all such writings are of no interest to the Jew. They must be of supreme interest, if the Jew cares at all for his spiritual integrity and honor, and for the general determination of religious truth. It is impossible for any writer to discuss Jesus, without touching upon the Jew and the Jew's religion, and upon the relation of Jesus to the Jews. When Mr. Wells, for instance,

in "Mr. Britling Sees it Through," avers that the real God of the modern world is Christ, and that God the Creator, whom Mr. Wells finds uncongenial, is a survival of "the Jew God," whom Christianity has rejected, he makes affirmations which the Jewish reader cannot ignore, and which even an intelligent Christian should not leave unchallenged. Similarly, Mr. Shaw's facile differentiation between Jesus and the Jews, with its conventional disparagement of the Jews, is of import to the Jewish reader. Even such brilliant men as Mr. Shaw and Mr. Moore, unfortunately, do not know enough about the Jews and the Jewish religion, either of the age of Jesus or of any other age, to be able to speak of them accurately. That their assertions perpetuate error in Christian minds is bad enough; that they make confusion worse confounded for uninformed Jewish readers, is worse.

I have spoken of the interest that the

Jew, as a religious being, must take in Jesus. Another reason, however, is that Jesus was a Jew. No sensible Jew can be indifferent to the fact that a Jew should have had such a tremendous part in the religious education and direction of the human race.

We often speak of the religious mission of the Jewish people. We speak of the wonderful influence of Moses, of the Prophets, not only upon Israel, but upon the world at large. How can we ignore the work of Jesus? It matters not, for the moment, whether we consider him original or no, right or wrong; the fact of his influence cannot be blinked, nor his connection with the Jewish people. "The origins of Christianity," says Renan, "are in Judaism: they have to be set at least seven hundred and fifty years before Jesus. In that early age there appeared the great prophets, creators of an entirely new idea in religion." Hence, in order to explain the rise of Christianity,

Renan wrote a history of the Jewish people. Similarly, no intelligent Jew can fail to be interested in the one Jew whose name is so intimately linked with the origin of Christianity and the evolution of the religious life of mankind.

Nor is the actual attitude of modern Jews to Jesus of any less importance. Historical considerations apart, there is the practical question. What do modern Jews think of Jesus? It is a query we cannot put aside. We cannot shut ourselves up in the silence of past centuries. Be our answer what it may, we should try to frame one.

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THE JEWISH HERITAGE OF JESUS

In her book on Jesus, Mary Austin justly emphasizes the fact that Jesus was a Jew. Yet, recent years have witnessed attempts to set Jesus apart from the Jewish people.

This practice originated with people antagonistic to the Jew and so convinced of the inferiority of his race and religion, as to find it hard to treat Jesus as a Jew. Thus, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, a fanatic on racialism, and yet an admirer of Jesus, in his work on "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century," sought to show that Jesus, being a Galilean, was not a Semite at all, but an Aryan, as Galilee contained a considerable Aryan element. On the other hand, others more interested in religion than in race, but equally loath to leave Jesus to

the Jews, have sought to demonstrate that though Jesus may have sprung from the Jews, in religion he differed from them totally,— one might say miraculously. That neither of these views is based on the truth, any fair reader of the story of Jesus must realize.

No matter how long after the death of Jesus the story of his life, as we have it, was written, and what guided its authors, one thing stands out clearly, namely, that not only did Jesus belong to the Jews in every way, but also that to the very last he was fully conscious of that kinship and of what it implied.

In theological writings of the past century, much has been made of the question of the self-consciousness of Jesus. There has been all manner of debate as to what Jesus thought of himself and his mission. In other words, a real effort has been made to penetrate beyond the portrayal of Jesus

by the creeds and the churches to his own conception of himself and his task.

Now, if anything seems to be clear about the self-consciousness of Jesus, as far as we can gather from the gospels, it is this: that he was conscious of his Jewish derivation, as well as of his debt to his Jewish heritage and his duty to the Jewish people. His noblest teachings were illustrated by citations from the Jewish Scriptures, his most solemn admonitions were addressed to the Jewish people, and his most tender words were spoken concerning the Jewish people. "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together!" Jesus would not have been Jesus if he had not loved first and last the people from which he sprang and from whose heart his life-blood was drawn — if he had not been gratefully conscious of his heritage.

Unfortunately, this fact has been obscured by the latter-day quarrel about the originality of Jesus. This combat was the natural offspring of the historical or comparative method of study so dear to the modern mind. Jesus, it is argued by some, was not original at all; his teachings were borrowed from Hindu and Egyptian sources. The chief controversy, however, has turned about Judaism. Jewish writers have tried to prove that everything taught by Jesus may be found in Jewish literature, and that therefore he could not be called original; while Christians have deemed it necessary to defend Jesus against the charge of borrowing or reproducing from Jewish sources, lest his originality be impugned.

This controversy may seem momentous to the learned disputants. But it has very little to do with the character of Jesus or the worth of his work, and one is almost sure that he himself would have cared very little

about it. It springs from a peculiar conception as to what really constitutes originality, particularly in the spiritual and ethical sphere, which was preëminently the sphere of Jesus' life and work.

What is originality? We could do no better than accept a definition offered by Hazlitt. "Genius or originality," he says, "is for the most part some strong quality in the mind, answering to and bringing out some new and striking quality in nature." "This," he adds, "is the test and triumph of originality, not to show us what has never been, and what we may therefore very easily never have dreamt of, but to point out to us what is before our eyes and under our feet, though we have had no suspicion of its existence, for want of sufficient strength of intuition, of determined grasp of mind, to seize and retain it."

This is the true nature of originality, particularly in the domain of spiritual percep-

tion and instruction. That is why the Jewish Prophets never pretended to teach anything new. What they taught, they felt, was but a renewal, a fresh proclamation or revelation, of what had been revealed and proclaimed long ago. "The Lord, the God of your fathers," Moses was to say to Israel, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations." The prophetic successors of Moses never deviated from his example of addressing their people in the name of the God and the faith of the fathers. "When Israel was a child," we read in Hosea,

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him,
And out of Egypt I called My son.
The more they called them, the more they went
from them;
They sacrificed unto the Baalim,
And offered to graven images.
And I, I taught Ephraim to walk,

Taking them by their arms;
But they knew not that I healed them.
I drew them with cords of a man
With bands of love.
How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
How shall I surrender thee, Israel?"

In Jeremiah, the Lord says:

"I remember for thee the affection of thy youth,
The love of thine espousals;
How thou wentest after Me in the wilderness,
In a land that was not sown."

And in Malachi we read:

"From the days of your fathers ye have turned aside
From Mine ordinances, and have not kept them.
Return unto Me, and I will return unto you,
Saith the Lord of hosts."

In his own way Jesus did what the Prophets had done: he gave a fresh interpretation of the laws governing the spiritual life, a fresh message concerning the meaning and the purpose of religion, a new illumination of the sense and the object of the old law

and of the old prophetic utterances. Here lay his genius and originality. Moreover, he sought to teach his hearers and disciples the need of gaining, each for himself, such a fresh and personal appreciation of religion. Even in this very important matter Jesus did not profess to say anything that had never been said before: he could not have professed it in view of what he had read in Jeremiah and the Psalms. But he did try to teach these essential truths and central beauties of the religious life in his own way, and through his own experience, and by means of his own personal life. And wherever we find true personality, we have originality. Supreme personality is greatest originality.

To realize this, however, does not mean to lessen the value to Jesus of his Jewish spiritual heritage. Mary Austin is certainly right when she insists that Jesus was a Jew

born and bred, and that "always, to his death, Judaism was there about the roots of his life." Indeed, in order to appreciate his ideal and his work fully, we must consider what ideals and thoughts he inherited from the Jewish people that had produced him.

One impression we cannot help gaining of Jesus, is that he was not a bookish man. His denunciation of the scribes, the scholars of the time, we need hardly take literally. He probably was not as bitter against the scribes as sometimes he is made out to be, though undoubtedly he detested the pedants and the hypocrites among them. None the less, we may be sure that his habits were not those of the professional scholar. They were those of the man of the people, rather than the studious recluse, of the lover of the out of doors, rather than of the study. Yet, to learn what sort of spiritual and intellectual heritage Jesus got from his people, there

is but one thing for us to do, namely, consider the Jewish literature that existed at the time. For, in that literature are stored up the ideas that helped mold his mind, and through it we get an idea of the mental and spiritual atmosphere that surrounded him.

Now, the first and foremost part of his heritage was the Jewish Bible. We must recall, however, that the Bible was not as ancient a book then as it is now. It was not as antique, as remote, as detached a book. It was still a recent creation or compilation. Parts of it were less than two hundred years old; and as a final compilation it was even younger. It had not become as petrified a book as to many people it is to-day. To Jesus, no doubt, it was a live book. He had his preferences in it (as, indeed, had every intelligent Jew of his day and of every other day) and he read in it, and chose from it, according to his prefer-

ences, and according to what appealed most to his ethical sense and spiritual nature. We have no reason to think that he discarded the Pentateuch; on some important occasions he quoted from it, and he took from it his famous summary of the substance of religion. But he was particularly fond of certain portions of the Prophets and of the Psalms, probably because in them he found closest kinship to his own spirit. In this regard, as I have said, he did what spiritual and enlightened Jews have done more or less in all ages. The Jews have not been bibliolaters; and the individual Jew, despite the canonization of the Bible, has always exercised the privilege of choice and preference in the Bible.

But the Bible was not the whole of the Jewish heritage of Jesus. One still meets with people that think of the Bible as the product of a single period. They do not realize that the Bible was the product of

many centuries of Jewish spiritual activity and creation, and that in the Bible itself nothing is so clear as the process of spiritual development — of the growth, the evolution of religious and ethical ideas. Nor do they realize that when the Bible was closed, it meant, indeed, the close of a period in Jewish life and thought, but by no means the cessation of the spiritual development of the Jewish people. None the less, there is no doubt that that spiritual development went on, just as vigorously and just as vitally as before the Bible had been compiled. And of this spiritual activity we find records in a very important part of Jewish literature: first, in what is known as the Apocrypha and the Pseudo-Epigrapha, and secondly, in such works as those of the Jewish philosopher Philo, who lived in Alexandria during the very century of Jesus.

I shall not undertake to say that Jesus directly or indirectly was acquainted with

any of those works. But this may be said and ought not to be lost sight of: it is in those works that we find a picture of the development of Jewish thought in the centuries between the close of the Jewish Bible and the birth of Jesus, and whether or no Jesus himself had any actual contact with them, they formed part of the thought-life into which he was born, part of the spiritual atmosphere that he breathed. As it would be impossible to understand him fully without knowledge of the Jewish Bible, so it is impossible to understand him fully — or shall I say to explain him fully? — without familiarity with those other parts of Jewish literature and without proper appreciation of their content.

And what do those parts of Jewish literature teach us?

First, that the centuries between the close of the Old Testament and Jesus were not

dead centuries, but full of life and activity, producing a rich and varied literature of their own.

Secondly, that no less than previous periods they were a period of religious development for the Jewish people: that the old religious ideas were not carried along merely as the dead luggage of the past, but that they were interpreted and amplified according to the deeper insight and fuller knowledge of the times.

Thirdly, that certain religious ideas, found in the Old Testament not at all, or merely in embryo, first grew up during that period, or found their full and conscious expression: as, for example, the idea of immortality.

And, finally, we are taught by this literature that during this period, as at all other times, there was no spiritual uniformity in Israel, there being room and recognition within its household for men of different spiritual temperaments and religious views.

The essentials were the same; in particulars, they differed.

It is necessary to consider this part of the Jewish heritage of Jesus in order to understand aright his relation to it. He was not hostile in his attitude to it. He was very little of a controversialist. I doubt whether he willingly would have said a word against a single law, except insofar as it was used to thwart rather than to advance true religion. "If ye had known what this meaneth, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' ye would not have condemned the guiltless." It was not his habit to go about carping at the commandments, or their abuses. He did not bother much about the tares in the garden of life. His concern was for the wheat, and his eye on the final harvest, and how to help it grow.

"The kingdom of heaven," he taught, "is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when

the blade sprang up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he saith, Nay; lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." (*Matt.* 13, 24–30)

And therein lay the originality of Jesus. He made religion a personal matter. Religion and personality with him became one. Religion, he said, could be something real only when expressed through a person. One cannot know God save one knows man, or, as he was fond of putting it, with the thought of the fatherly relation between man and God ever in his mind, one cannot know the Father save one knows the Son. "I do

nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me." Moreover, a similar personal experience and expression of Religion he asked of others. "He that hath ears, let him hear!" His message was not, Make me, or my words, the means of your religion. It was, Let religion be to you and with you what it is to me and with me, a means of personal life, an expression of personal experience, a token of personal relationship with God, of filial self-identification with God. "The kingdom of Heaven," he said, according to the Sayings of Jesus, discovered recently, "is within you, and whosoever himself shall know shall find it; and having found ye shall know yourselves, that sons and daughters are ye of the Father Almighty, and ye shall know that ye are in His precincts, and ye are the city."

It is thus that Jesus through his own personality interpreted, transmitted, and transfused his Jewish heritage.

THE JEWISH ENVIRONMENT OF JESUS

"IF you would understand the poet," Goethe has said, "go to the poet's country." His counsel has been seconded by the best modern criticism and psychology. No lesson of science is accepted more generally than this: that two main factors enter into the making of the individual, namely, heredity and environment. Of course, both together do not explain completely any real personality. Wherever we find true personality, we find something added to the sum total, to the resultant, of both heredity and environment. It is this addition that often forms the unique personality — a source of wonder and an object of admiration. Abraham Lincoln, for example, was something

more than the product of antecedent and surrounding forces. None the less, heredity and environment are surely active in the creation of even the most independent and unexplainable individuals, though their working may not always be patent. To understand the character and the work of even the greatest, most unique, men we must take these factors into account.

We cannot do otherwise in the case of Jesus. We have seen how essential an appreciation of his Jewish heritage is to an understanding of his personality and his doctrine. Who can hope to understand Jesus without a proper estimate of those spiritual treasures of the Jewish people that Jesus loved, of those spiritual fountains from which he drank from beginning to end? Nor can one possibly hope to grasp the meaning of Jesus's work and the secret of his personality — with its fusion of diverse qualities, tenderness and passion, mildness and

vehemence, eloquence and elusiveness, fervor and reticence — without some appreciation of the environment in which he lived and moved and taught.

That an uncommon scene witnessed the growth and work of Jesus, we all know. It may be said, however, that it was one of the most unique and dramatic scenes in all human history — a scene of spiritual unrest, among a people accustomed by nature and habit to spiritual striving, a scene of feverish agitation and excitement, of political and religious ferment. "Outside of the French Revolution," says Renan, "no historic *milieu* was so well adapted as the one in which Jesus was formed to develop those hidden forces which humanity holds in reserve and which it discloses only in its days of fever and peril." It was a time of wars and rumors of war, of Roman oppression and Jewish rebellion, a period of political ambitions and intrigue; in such an age arose Jesus with

his gospel of gentleness, of love, of a dreamy detachment from the material world, with his affirmation of the supremacy of spiritual intuitions, discernments, and devotions. This very contrast between himself and the mad whirl of his times, no doubt, served to arrest attention and to gain for him a hearing and a following; it gave dramatic distinctness to his personality, and invested it with the originality about the genuineness of which so many of late have taken to quarreling. A glimpse of his environment we must therefore try to get, in order to perceive both his origin and orginality.

What was the character of this environment? It was Jewish from beginning to end, and it lay between Galilee and Jerusalem. Galilee and Jerusalem, with all they signified in point of ideals, customs, contemporary struggles and hopes, with all their peculiarities of Nature and of people: these two formed the environment of Jesus. We

can understand him better, if we take this into account.

First, there was Galilee, the northern Jewish province, with Nazareth as one of its numerous and densely peopled towns. It is commonly accepted nowadays that Jesus was born in Nazareth, though the old tradition represents him as a native of Bethlehem of Judea, in order to conform his place of birth to an ancient prophecy (which in reality is irrelevant). No matter, however, where he was born, in Nazareth he grew up and in Galilee he spent almost all his life. Even when in the closing years of his life he entered upon what is called his public ministry and appeared in Judea, he was wont to return as quickly and as frequently as possible to the Galilee he knew and loved.

Now, Galilee was a beautiful country, the very country for the life, the thought, the love of a dreamer and poet — a poet of Nature and of human life. It was a land of

superb situation and enchanting scenery. It was full of hills and dales. From any lofty spot the eye could travel to the mountains round about: to the West, Mount Carmel, dropping gently to the sea; further away, the mountains of Shechem and Gilboa and Tabor, with their wonderful historic associations. Through a gap between the hills of Shunem and Tabor, one saw the Valley of Jordan and the high plains of Perea, forming a straight line to the East. To the north there were the mountains of Safed, and further on, Hermon, with the life of large cities teeming behind its peaks, while to the south stretched the hills of Judea, with the beauty of Jerusalem beyond. Such was Galilee, and such in particular the situation of Nazareth. Renan, who visited it himself, dwells on the fascination of Nazareth and its surroundings. "No place in the world," he says, "was made so well for dreams of perfect happiness."

Nor must we forget the people. Galilee was one of the most populous provinces of the land. At the time of Jesus it was under Roman rule, and its population was the most mixed in Israel. It contained Phœnicians, Arabs, Syrians, and Greeks, as well as Jews. Besides, it had suffered all kinds of admixtures in the course of its variegated history. Nevertheless, the life of Galilee was Jewish, though in many ways it differed from that of Judea. At no time was there complete uniformity in all things throughout Israel — neither during the period of the Bible nor after. The Galileans were more informal than the Judeans, less bound by rules and regulations, more spontaneous, less learned and more poetic, less legalistic and more lyrical. Certain customs and ceremonies of theirs differed from Judea. Their language was not as accurate nor as pure as in Jerusalem, which the men of the latter attributed to lack of good teachers and to indifference.

Yet, the Galileans did not fail to produce some illustrious rabbis, who had a share in the making of the Talmud. Jose the Galilean, the learned and magnanimous rabbi of the first century, was one of them.

The Galileans cared more for the Agada than the Halakha — for the poetic, ethical, and spiritual interpretation of Scripture rather than the legalistic. Withal, they were, according to the testimony of Josephus, brave, courageous, and industrious. They knew no cowardice. For several centuries they gave heroes and martyrs to the cause of Jewish emancipation from the yoke of Rome. They were a temperamental people, according to the Talmud, excitable and enthusiastic, capable of profound hate as well as of ardent love and devotion. Moreover, they learnt the lessons of tolerance from their relation with the outside world — with Greek speech and Roman officials. In a word, they combined the qualities bred by

contact with the mountains, on the one hand, and with a cosmopolitan life, on the other.

Amid such scenes Jesus grew up. If we understand the Galileans, it is easier to understand him; if we understand Galilee, with its mountains and lakes and rivers, and far-off sea, it is easier to realize the inspiration of his thought and far-off dream.

To no people in the world have the mountains meant and said just the things they meant and said to the Jews; nor the sea. They were reminders of the grandeur and of the deep mystery of life, and of its divinity. "Thy righteousness is like the mighty mountains; Thy judgments are the great deep."

Meditating amid the mountains and on the shore of the sea, Jesus realized the meaning of Righteousness and the depth and power of the Spirit. He perceived the transiency and unimportance of material

things, and the sovereign significance of God. He realized his own unity with his Father; and that that unity was really the only thing that mattered. To know God was to know himself, and to know himself was to know God. "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." "No man knoweth the son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the son." "I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, I speak these things." To understand man was to understand God; to understand God was to understand man: neither could be understood fully without the other.

"'Tis the sublime of man,
Our noontide Majesty, to know ourselves
Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole!
This fraternizes man, this constitutes
Our charities and bearings. But 'tis God
Diffused through all, that doth make all one whole!"

The modern poet perceives in the little

flower in the crannied wall an intimation of the secret of existence: Jesus was taught by the mountains and the sea of Galilee, as well as by the lily and the sparrow. "Ye ask," we read in the New Sayings of Jesus, "who are they that draw us up to heaven, if the kingdom is in heaven? Verily I say, the fowls of the heaven, and every creature that is under the earth or upon the earth, and the fishes of the sea, these are they that draw you!"

Moreover, to know the Galileans, I said, is to understand better the personality of Jesus. He, too, is a man of temperament. He is capable of love and of hate, of devotion and of detachment; a man of fervid friendships and of solitude. His mood is not always the same. He is lyrical, rather than legalistic. He does not set out to break the laws, but he knows that character is greater than conformity. He is loyal and devout, true to the past, but also to himself.

He is now tolerant and now contemptuous of the Gentiles. A true Galilean!

Some would have us believe that Jesus was an Essene, and that he learnt his lessons from the Essenes. On this idea is founded Mr. Moore's imaginative novel about Jesus. The Essenes were one of the three parties then known among the Jews, the others being the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They were mystics, ascetics, and communists — a brotherhood scattered through various cities, according to Josephus, though it is commonly held that they lived apart in some one place.

In reality, however, we have no right to identify Jesus with the Essenes. Like all great personalities, Jesus was no party man; he was himself: he never really belonged to a crowd, nor could he attach himself to one; time and again we see him leave the multitude for the mountains or the sea. Insofar, however, as he belonged to any group, it was the Pharisees, whom he is said to have

denounced repeatedly, but whose schools he attended and in whose synagogues he prayed, studied, and preached.

The Pharisees were the teachers of the people; they were the spiritual leaders; they were the heads of the schools and of the synagogues; they were the true friends of the people. And though in Galilee their activity was not as vigorous as in Judea, the synagogues and the schools, there as elsewhere, were under their influence and direction. The Sadducees were the priests and aristocrats, and their domain was Jerusalem.

What did Jesus know of Jerusalem, and in what way did Jerusalem form part of his environment?

Like every loyal Galilean, Jesus was devoted to Jerusalem. It was part of every good Jew's life to make periodic pilgrimages to the capital and the Temple. No doubt, Jesus, in his youth, made such pilgrimages, and we can imagine what a deep

impression the life of the capital must have made on his quick, poetic mind. At first, the glory of it may well have captivated him. But as his knowledge grew fuller, as his perception deepened, as he realized the meaning of the intrigues, and ambitions, and rivalries, and hypocrisies that centered about the Temple, how keen must have been the pang of his disappointment! And when from the riotous and pompous whirl of Jerusalem he returned to the quiet hills of Galilee, how must his heart have mourned over the corruption of the capital! Such experience — the revolt of the dreamer at the violation of his dream — led finally to his clash with the Temple forces and denunciation of the pompous and hypocritical Temple piety. It was like the indignation of Elijah at the court of Ahab, like that of Amos at Bethel — or of Jeremiah at the Jerusalem of his day. It was not the denunciation of hate, but the denunciation of

love — of the idealist against the corruptors of the city he had loved and dreamed about and idealized from afar. "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

What was the character and the great work of Jesus? He was a man of vision, a revealer, a spiritual perceiver and dreamer, a man who sought to point out the eternal things of life — the things that mean most in the universe. More and more he realized the insignificance of the outward and the temporary, and the supremacy of the spirit. And that conviction and realization he expressed through his own life and death. That is what has made him the fascinating figure he has formed in human history.

That is what still gives him a place in the hearts of men — weary, as were many round about him, of plotting and plodding for external things, for things of little worth.

This Jesus we can understand only in connection with his environment. One to whom Jesus is but a miracle-monger, a controversialist on the obligatoriness or futility of the law, or a metaphysical concept, might neglect the study of his Jewish environment. But he to whom Jesus is the great dreamer, the spokesman of the spiritual ideal, the appraiser of the essential values of life, the man who discerned the difference between show and reality, between the fleeting and the eternal, and tried to fix the eyes of his fellow-men on the real and the eternal,— to such, an appreciation of the environment of Jesus is an inevitable prerequisite to an appreciation of Jesus himself.

THE JEWISH CHARACTERISTICS OF JESUS

A STUDY of the Jewish characteristics of Jesus is complicated by the peculiar notion the world still has of the character of the Jew. Nothing would look more incongruous than a collocation of the diverse estimates of the Jewish character.

Suffice to say that extremes have met in the appraisal of the Jew. To some, the Jewish character is all gold, to others it is all dross. Some see in the Jew the prototype of idealism and faith; to others he is a monument of materialism and calculation. To some, he is the typical anarchist; to others, he is legalism incarnate. To some, he is the world's leader of progress, to others, he is the predestined conservative.

Thus, there are no two opposites of virtue and vice which, at one time or another, have not been attributed to the Jew.

As a matter of fact, the Jew, as such, is neither the one extreme, nor the other. The Jew represents, as such, neither the gold of idealism, nor the dross of materialism, altogether. Like the rest of human life, Jewish life has formed a mixture, a skein of tangled yarn, good and ill together, though certain forces have from the very start sought to make the soul of goodness and idealism prevail in Israel. The Jew has been a composite; and the Jew knows it, if no one else.

Among the ancient rabbis, close to the age of Jesus, we find true descriptions of the character of the Jew. "A peculiar people, this," said one rabbi, referring to the Jews, "their character is hard to fathom; when Aaron asked them to give for the golden calf, they did so, and when Moses asked for the tabernacle, they also gave." "The

Jews," said another rabbi, "are likened in Scripture to the stars and the dust; and so they are: when they ascend, they go up to the stars; and when they descend, they go down to the dust."

Thus the old teachers sought to describe the contrary characteristics of their people. Some Jews to them were disciples of Abraham, others disciples of Balaam. Jeremiah had likened Israel to two baskets of figs: "the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, that cannot be eaten, they are so bad." A variety of opposite dispositions and traits, indeed, have made up the Jewish character. Men who know the Jewish people from within have time and again recognized its twofoldness, its duality, as does Mr. Zangwill in one of his penetrating poems.

Perhaps this is why it might be said that no one can understand Jesus so well as the sympathetic Jew. There are those who imagine that a study of Jesus requires chiefly

a knowledge of languages and exegesis. Thus they set about interpreting and disentangling the gospels. But what is needed even more than Greek and hermeneutics is psychology — the sort of knowledge, sympathy, and imagination that help one to understand a soul. For that reason, a sympathetic and imaginative student like Renan and a novelist like Mr. Moore, despite their errors, are apt to get closer to the true story of Jesus than many a man whose chief aim is not the reading of a soul but the amassing of theological and linguistic footnotes. Unfortunately, neither Mr. Moore nor Renan have known the Jew from within, and Renan particularly is often led astray by his racial theory, according to which the Semitic race differed radically from the Aryan race and produced spiritual characteristics, founded on racial peculiarities, common to all Semites, including the Jews. This was the error of Renan, which unwittingly made him the

father of modern anti-Semitism, and for which he has been reproved both by biblical students conversant with the spiritual difference that existed between the Jews and other Semites, and by such a critic as Ferdinand Brunetière, who hated the racial theory as subversive of all religion.

A man like Mr. Claude G. Montefiore, in his study of Jesus, escapes the psychologic mistakes of Moore and Renan, being himself a Jew, and therefore able to view, to realize, Jesus from within. His enthusiasm may carry him too far; but not often.

"We others," says Charles Péguy, the French poet, "are also Jesus's brothers, we are his brothers through Adam, through our father Adam; we are brothers of Jesus in our humanity. But you, Jews, you were his brothers through his very family — brothers of his race and lineage."

Indeed, whatever has been said to the contrary, Jesus was a Jew. Strange, indeed,

are the ways of anti-Semitism. For thousands of years the world has had a grievance against the Jews for not acknowledging Jesus as their messiah. He had come unto his own, they argued, and his own not only rejected him, but they continue to reject him. Yet, what some learned men of late have sought to impress on our minds is that Jesus was not a Jew after all, not even an Israelite, nor even a Semite. What Christians have believed for nineteen centuries, what the writers of the gospels unanimously affirmed and took pains to prove, what all these years the Jews have been blamed for not sufficiently appreciating, it took some learned leaders of modern anti-Semitism to seek to wipe out. Chamberlain, Delitzsch, Haupt, Haeckel — whether conscious or unconscious anti-Semites — and their outspoken anti-Semitic followers are now affirming that Jesus was not really a Jew.

They have their reasons. Of course, the

fundamental, sub-conscious argument probably is this: Jesus was a good man; a good man cannot be thought of as a Jew; therefore, Jesus was not a Jew. I have already referred to Houston Stewart Chamberlain's lucubrations on the subject. According to him, Jesus, a native of Galilee, could not possibly be a Jew by race. The more Chamberlain thinks about it, the more ecstatic his conviction grows and the profounder his contempt for those that still hold that a Galilean, and especially a good Galilean, could have been a Jew.

Professor Haupt is not satisfied with the mere negations of Chamberlain. He goes further. Jesus, according to his gospel, is an Aryan, an Indo-German, nothing less blue than Greek blood flows in the veins of Jesus, and the Greek spirit dwells in him. Thus alone Professor Haupt can account for the universalism and spiritual liberty of Jesus.

Other writers of the same school have

made the final summary on the subject. "Not from Judea," says one of them, "but from Galilee, the heathen country, came the man who to the base materialism of the Hebrew opposed the loftiest idealism and who, realizing the perversity of Jewish thinking, preached a doctrine that marked a complete reversal of Jewish ideas." Thus runs the latter-day message. And again: "While the Jew saw his chief goal in earthly gain and enjoyment, the Galilean taught disdain of all earthly goods and sought happiness in poverty and in spiritual satisfaction, in the cultivation of all the virtues, in selflessness and in purity of thought. He sought the weal of the soul in the dominion of the ideals, which he designated as the kingdom of God. The spiritual world of Christ and that of the Jews are as far apart as two suns." No wonder we are told that "it marks a perfect blindness to psychologic facts for one to find it possible to regard Jesus as a Jew."

There are so many inaccuracies in these statements that it would take more than one chapter to point them out in detail. Professor Koenig has both cited and refuted them in his little book on "The Chief Dogma of Anti-Semitism" (concerning which, written in German, we should have heard more had it not appeared just before the outbreak of the war). But it is this very blindness to psychologic facts that is behind the efforts of those who have been trying to tear the story of Jesus out of the history of the Jewish people, as well as of those who find it hard to reconcile the character of Jesus with that of the Jewish people. Better knowledge of Jewish psychology, of the soul of the Jewish people, would remove many a difficulty.

As a matter of fact, the student of the Jewish people knows that throughout history there have been two leading types of Jews; on the one hand, the physical Jew, on the

other, the spiritual Jew. The Jew belonging to the first class has identified Jewry with racialism. To him, Jewish affiliation is a matter solely of descent, with its accidents and prerogatives. Not infrequently this idea has gone with a certain pride of race, and even degenerated, as such things will, into chauvinism. The Jew of the second type, on the other hand, has identified Judaism with spiritual distinction and purpose. He also has been proud of his descent, of the Jewish past; but all this has spelt for him spiritual obligation and responsibility, without which physical appurtenances would mean nothing. There has never been a time when these two classes have not been represented in Israel, and their concurrence explains many a Jewish conflict and tragedy. But it is from the second class I have described that have sprung all the idealists of Israel, with their passions and exaltations, with their spiritual visions and valor; out

of it has come the immortal and unequaled idealism of the Jewish people.

Needless to say, the supreme representatives of this latter class were the men known as the Prophets of Israel. They were the chief idealists of the people, which means that they interpreted in terms of spiritual idealism both the past and the purpose of Israel. It is they that gave to the people the true meaning of the choice of Israel, and namely, in ideal terms, in terms of consecration and of righteousness, and they construed the religious tasks of the people in terms of spiritual elevation and ethical practice. To them everything else was as nothing in the balance against the moral and spiritual ends: the sacrifices, the temple, the state, the priests, kings, and politicians were nothing as against the people's consecration to spiritual and ethical ends. Such, on the whole, was the attitude and activity of the Prophets. And that is why, after the fash-

ion of idealists, the Prophets criticized their people so often and so severely. But did they hate their people? Never! They loved it even unto death. They believed in it. That is why they sought to correct it. And they comforted it, and wonderful pictures they drew of its future restoration and its fixed part in the future glories of mankind. Such were the Prophets. They were the pattern Jews of the spiritual type.

This type of Jew Jesus, in his own way and in his own age, exemplified. It is folly to fasten on minor points of Jesus' teaching as the distinctive parts of his message. Whatever he taught about religion and ethics, about godliness and the virtues, about brotherliness and universalism, may be found in the Jewish teachings of his predecessors and contemporaries and independent successors. It is not what he taught about humility or compassion or chastity that gave him distinction, or made him important. Any Jew-

ish teacher worthy his name no doubt taught the same. The importance of Jesus lay in that he gave another expression and was another incarnation of that great principle which the Jewish soul at its best has continually impressed upon the world — the prophetic principle, the principles of idealism and spirituality, of godliness and goodness, as against materialism and earthiness. In Jesus we find a fresh exemplification of Jewish characteristics, of those traits which the Prophets eternalized, and which have made for the immortality of the Jew. Thus, he exemplified the eternal struggle in Israel between what Charles Péguy, with remarkable insight, has called the mysticism and the politics of Israel. "There is a Jewish politics," says Péguy, "but there is also a Jewish mysticism. And the whole mysticism of Israel is that Israel pursues in the world his tenacious and tragic mission. Hence, the anguish, the most doleful of antagonisms that

can exist between politics and mysticism. A people of merchants, and also a people of prophets. The ones know for the others what calamity means."

In this light we can understand the attitude of Jesus to the Jews. He criticized his people. He chastised it. He sought to correct it. But he did not hate it. And he would not have been he, if he had hated it. "It means to leave humanity," says Pascal, "for a man to leave his own *milieu:* the grandeur of the human soul consists in knowing how to cling to the latter; the more it would seem to be the part of greatness to leave one's *milieu,* the more it is true greatness not to leave it." Jesus did not hate his people. He did not leave it. He loved it. Hence he pitied it, and comforted it, and sought to help it, as did the Prophets before him, and as every Jew belonging to the same type has tried to do ever since, according to his powers. All this served not to eclipse

or efface the Jewish characteristics of Jesus but rather to accentuate them.

What, then, are these characteristics? They are as follows:

Jesus was not only born a Jew, but conscious of his Jewish descent.

Jesus realized the spiritual distinction of the Jewish people, and regarded himself as sent to teach and help his people.

Jesus, like other teachers, severely criticized his people for their spiritual shortcomings, seeking to correct them, but at the same time he loved and pitied them. His whole ministry was saturated with love for his people, and loyalty to it.

Jesus, like all other of the noblest type of Jewish teachers, taught the essential lessons of spiritual religion — love, justice, goodness, purity, holiness — subordinating the material and the political to the spiritual and the eternal.

Is not this the inward meaning of the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness?

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written,

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee:
And on their hands they shall bear thee up,
Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou

serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." (*Mat.* 4:1–10.)

The facts of faith and of life — all of them, Jesus reads in the manner of the spiritual teachers of Israel. No wonder Professor Santayana has called the teaching of Jesus "pure Hebraism reduced to its spiritual essence."

In one other respect Jesus showed himself the true Jew. He was ready to die for his ideal, for his teaching, for his belief. His death has since meant a great deal of suffering to the Jew. The Jew has been blamed for it. But as a matter of fact, Jesus never was more the Jew than when he was willing quietly to die for his teaching and belief.

He was not the only Jew so to do. The story of martyrdom in Israel began several centuries before he came into the world. Suffering for religion's sake had become the badge and the business of the Jew. About

the time Jesus lived, a Jewish author produced as noble a panegyric of martyrdom as was ever written, the so-called "Fourth Book of the Maccabees." In Jesus' own day many a Jew died for trying to liberate their people, and particularly Galilean Jews, who were among the most loyal and zealous, and during the subsequent period Jews by the thousands took the same heroic course. It is a fate Jewish martyrs have shared throughout the ages, and their last words, when bidden to deny their faith or their teaching, invariably were: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One!" — the very words which, according to Jesus, were the essence of true Religion.

That Jesus died as he did was destined to bring endless agony to the Jew; but, on the other hand, it is something to make the Jew proud that Jesus was willing and ready so to die. It proved him the true Jew, showing forth in his dying moment that fidelity

to faith which has formed the chief glory of the Jewish character.

The words addressed by the author of the Fourth Book of the Maccabees to the martyr-mother of the seven sons slain by the cruel tyrant of the Greeks, are true of Israel:

"As the Ark of Noah, with the whole living world for her burden in the world-whelming Deluge, did withstand the mighty surges, so thou, the keeper of the Law, beaten upon every side by the surging waves of the passions, and strained as with strong blasts by the tortures of thy sons, didst nobly weather the storms that assailed thee for religion's sake."

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THE JEWISH ELEMENT IN THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

LATTER-DAY lives of Jesus have brought out one point above all others — the universal readiness to treat Jesus as a spiritual and ethical teacher, if nothing else. Even those who decline to accept the figure of Jesus as drawn by traditional Christianity, are ready to pay him tribute as a unique teacher. Indeed, there are such as affirm that the true greatness of Jesus can be appreciated only when dissociated from the dogmas and peculiar concepts gathered by the churches. In Mr. George Moore's novel, "The Brook Kerith," there is the subtle suggestion that as a teacher Jesus was impressive and fascinating, but it required Paul's peculiar illusions about Jesus to make him the hero he

became; otherwise he might have ended his days in the obscure seclusion of an Essene monastery. Be that as it may, the modern disposition is certainly to treat Jesus less as a metaphysical personage than as a religious and ethical teacher. Regarding him thus, we cannot fail to realize how much of the Jewish element pervaded the teaching of Jesus, particularly that part of it which is permanent and not merely a reflex of the circumstances of his time.

In a study of the teachings of Jesus, the unbiased student encounters one inevitable difficulty. It is not easy to determine what parts of the Gospels represent the authentic utterances of Jesus, as distinguished from those attributed to him by his disciples and by the founders of the early Christian communities. All the Gospels were written years after the death of Jesus — at least from thirty to sixty years after that event, and it is very doubtful whether we have them

in the original form. There are differences among them, not only in details but in the general treatment of the subject. The Fourth Gospel, for instance, though commonly accepted as the work of Jesus' favorite disciple, John, gives by no means the most attractive picture of its hero, mingling, as it does, mystical teaching of profound beauty with a story of constant querulousness. If John did write it, he wrote it as an old man, influenced by the memory of many a controversy and strife which occurred in the establishment of the early Christian communities rather than in the life of Jesus. Thus, in all the Gospels it is by no means easy to fix the actual utterances of Jesus. This much, however, the sympathetic and unprejudiced student can do. He can sense those teachings and those sayings that most surely represent the spirit of Jesus.

I say, he can sense them. It might be objected that this means the introduction of too

much intuition into historic study — too much subjective treatment. Yet, is not this what we have to do, and are wont to do, in the study of any personality? There are certain central, fundamental facts on which every personality is built. A sincere and consistent personality is an expression of such central facts. They form the spirit of the personality. They form its core, its character, and we can usually guess particulars from those central truths, from that spirit. In the case of Jesus that was supremely true. No one was ruled more completely by the central truth of his life than he, and it does not require overmuch wisdom to determine what is likely to have expressed his spirit, to have harmonized with the ethical and spiritual purpose of his life — in a word, what in all likelihood formed an authentic part of his teaching.

In order to understand the teaching of Jesus, we must abandon, first of all, the com-

mon notion that the purpose of Jesus was to overthrow the Jewish religion, or the old law, and to found a new one. This notion he himself sought to uproot when first it cropped up among his contemporaries. The words in which he tried to do it now form part of the Sermon on the Mount, and probably were spoken early in his ministry. "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled."

What do these words mean? If anything, it is this: first, that Jesus does not mean to say or to do anything that might destroy or damage the inherited law and doctrine of his people; then, that the welfare of the world depends upon the observance and the fulfillment of those teachings; and, finally, that it is his purpose and conscious mission

to advance the fulfillment of the old law and the old Prophets.

But what does he mean by fulfillment? That we must seek to understand in order to grasp the relation of Jesus to those prophecies and precepts. By fulfillment he does not mean merely a mechanical fulfillment; he means a spiritual fulfillment; he means a grasp of the full content and aim of the Law, an absorption and application of its spirit, an inward apprehension of its content, and the unfoldment of its purpose in actual life.

That this is what fulfillment of the Law meant to Jesus, we are moved to believe by the general Jewish attitude. This the best Jewish teachers sought to teach at the time of Jesus, as well as before and after it.

It is commonly said that the life of the Jewish people in the age of Jesus was governed by the Law. Of course, it was; but the Law that did so govern it, was not a

dead law. It was a living law, though come down from the past, and all the efforts of the teachers were directed toward discovering the ethical contents and the spiritual implicates of the Law. That formed the chief task of the teachers, and gave birth to the enormous literature of the age. For the rabbis, as for Jesus, the letter did not suffice. What lay behind and within the letter their eyes sought continually, and every teacher tried to find in it more than his predecessors and colleagues had found. There was rivalry among them in the discovery of the ethical and spiritual implications of tradition — so much so that they came to regard wisdom as the result of the rivalry of Scribes (or teachers). Mechanical conformity was not enough. The Law demanded spiritual discernment and realization.

No doubt, this is what Jesus meant when he spoke about having come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets, and when he admon-

ished his hearers not only to fulfill every tittle and iota of the Law, but to do more; to go farther and deeper than all formal teaching and academic interpretation. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the Scribes and the Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Such teaching was Jewish. It was founded on Jewish precepts and precedents. Its effort to penetrate and amplify the Law was in harmony with the practice and methods of Jewish teachers. Its motive as well as its aims were Jewish. Even where Jesus offered something in a new form or in a new way, it accorded with his general aim to disclose the ethical and spiritual contents of the old Law.

This idea underlies two of the most pregnant parables of Jesus.

First, we have it in the parable of the new wine and the old bottles. Questioned as to why his disciples violated some old forms,

Jesus replies that the new wine of Religion requires new bottles. This parable is often cited as indicative of Jesus' hostility to the old forms of Judaism. It is accepted as authentic. But there is another parable which is not quoted so frequently, and yet supplements it, nor is there any reason for regarding it as less authentic. After explaining his parables to the disciples, it is related that he asked, "Have ye understood all these things?" "Yes," they answered. Then he said unto them:

"Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasures things new and old." (*Mat.* 13:51–52.)

In other words, the wise teacher of spiritual and ethical truth, like the good householder, will use and cherish both new things and old, according to their worth to the promotion of his aim.

There is no more reason for denying the authenticity of this parable than of the one about the new wine and the old bottles. On the contrary, it represents the very spirit of the method of teaching used by Jesus. It is the more comprehensive, though not the more familiar, of the two parables. Out of his spiritual treasures Jesus brought forth things old and new, as they served the great purpose of his ministry. In this respect, he did what every great Jewish teacher of his time sought to do.

What formed the essential teaching of Jesus? We may sum it up briefly. He began with the idea of the Divine judgment that was at hand. That led on to the idea of repentance, as the one great need of his people. From that he was led to an affirmation of the essential character of religion — the spiritual fulfillment of the law, rather than mere outward conformity. And from

that he pushed on, quite naturally, to an exposition of how the spiritual side of religion can be expressed in conduct — in the particulars of everyday conduct. These latter points are developed in his various parables and sentences on love and forbearance and faith and humility, on service and godliness. But the quintessence of his teaching is summed up pithily in the opening chapter of Mark.

"After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Now, it means no denial of the power, nor of the originality, of Jesus to recognize in this teaching a new expression of what the religious leaders of Israel, and particularly the Prophets, had sought to teach. The Prophets time and again spoke of the com-

ing of the Divine judgment — the Doom. "Hear, ye peoples," cried Micah,

"Hear, ye peoples, all of you;
Hearken, O earth, and all that therein is;
And let the Lord God be witness against you,
The Lord from His holy temple.
For, behold, the Lord cometh forth out of His place.
And will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.
And the mountains shall be molten under Him.
And the valleys shall be cleft,
As wax before the fire,
As waters that are poured down a steep place.
For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sins of the house of Israel."

Again and again the Prophets pleaded for repentance, as a means of moral improvement and of recovery of relationshp with God; and namely, for spiritual, rather than outward, repentance. "Yet even now," we read in Joel,

"Yet even now, saith the Lord,
Turn ye unto Me with all your heart,

And with fasting, and with weeping and with
lamentation;
And rend your heart, and not your garments,
And turn unto the Lord your God;
For He is gracious and compassionate,
Long-suffering, and abundant in mercy,
And repenteth Him of the evil."

Without ceasing the Prophets pointed out the uselessness of a mere formal religion and the paramountcy of the spiritual and ethical element in all religious profession and practice. Who does not recall Isaiah's burning words concerning it?

" Hear the word of the Lord,
Ye rulers of Sodom;
Give ear unto the law of our God,
Ye people of Gomorrah.
To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices
unto Me?
Saith the Lord;
I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams,
And the fat of fed beasts;
And I delight not in the blood
Of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.

When ye come to appear before Me,
Who hath required this at your hand,
To trample my courts?
Bring no more vain oblations;
It is an offering of abomination unto Me;
New moon and sabbath, the holding of convocations —
I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly.
Your new moons and your appointed seasons
My soul hateth;
They are a burden unto Me;
I am weary to bear them.
And when ye spread forth your hands,
I will hide Mine eyes from you;
Yea, when ye make many prayers,
I will not hear;
Your hands are full of blood.
Wash you, make you clean,
Put away the evil of your doings
From before Mine eyes,
Cease to do evil;
Learn to do well:
Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Conditions may have changed from age to

age, but the idea and the purpose of the Prophet remained ever the same.

"By a prophet the Lord brought Israel up out of Egypt,
And by a prophet was he kept."

That is the common link between Elijah and Amos and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and the rest: thy all have the same ideal. And the same purpose, under new conditions, animated the teachings of Jesus, and found in them a new expression.

Yet, there were certain things which formed the unique power and fascination of Jesus' teaching, and the secret of his popularity.

First, Jesus put the personal element into the heart of his teaching. He did not teach in mere academic fashion, as did others. He taught in a personal way, by means of personal appeal and through personal experience. He identified himself with his teaching. He and his doctrine were one. He

was part of the truth he felt and sought to spread. It was of the very essence of his outlook. Of course, other teachers also made direct appeals and used personal experience. But in their case it was accidental, a mere illustration of their teaching. In the case of Jesus it was part of his very being.

The truth with which he was concerned formed his sole passion, to which he sacrificed, paradoxically, even his closest relations. "Kinship," says Philo, the Jewish philosopher of the first century, "is in truth not reckoned merely by blood; it is rather doing the same actions and seeking the same ends." We hear little about Jesus' association with his own family. Dearest to him were those that felt and toiled with him, and understood him.

"And there came his mother and his brethren; and, standing without, they sent unto him, calling him. And a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto him, Behold thy mother and thy

brethren without seek for thee! And he answered them, and saith, Who is my mother and my brethren? And looking round on them which sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (*Mark* 3:31–35.)

Similarly, those who would become his friends, had to sacrifice everything to the ideal he taught.

"And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, and that is God. Thou knowest the commandments; Do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal; do not bear false witness; honor thy father and thy mother. And he said, all these have I kept from my youth up. Now, when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him: Yet, lackest thou one thing. Sell all that thou hast and distribute it unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of

God, for it is easier for a camel to go through the needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who, then, can be saved? And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. And Peter said later, We have left all and followed thee. And he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or parents or brethren or wife or children for the Kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time and in the world to come life everlasting." (*Luke* 16: 18–30.)

Jesus beheld everything under the aspect of the personal, as part of himself, and as related to himself: God, Nature, and his fellowmen. It was inevitable, therefore, that all his teaching should be permeated with his personality. His chief concern was not discussion of academic questions, nor participation in learned disputes, but to help men in the actualities of life by opening up to their vision the world of spiritual truth.

Then, Jesus appealed with special force to the poor, the lonely, the forlorn, and particu-

larly to those who had gone astray. Here, again, it was not so much a matter of novelty: the teaching was not new; the Prophets were friends of the poor, defenders of the oppressed, and so were the rabbis; but the personal relation made a difference. Jesus not only championed the poor, he lived their life; he not only pitied sinners, but mingled with them; he not only praised penitents, as did every conventional rabbi, but he showed his love for them in personal contact.

"And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me! And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners! And when Jesus heard it, he

saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (*Mark* 2: 13–17.)

Jesus did not preach on the problems of poverty and of penitence; he dealt tenderly, lovingly, with the penitent and the poor.

As we study the ethical and religious teaching of Jesus, we cannot help recognizing the Jewish element in it, its Jewish authenticity, its relationship to the best prophetic traditions and ideals. The merit of Jesus lay in giving to those traditions and ideals a new expression, a new emphasis, and in endowing them with the perennial appeal of a fascinating personality. That he himself regarded his teaching as a pure expression of the Jewish religious ideal— as a fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets — one can hardly doubt. Indeed, we have it from his own lips. When asked by a scribe what were the essentials of Religion, he answered, it is said,

with citations from the Jewish Law. The scribe assented and evoked from Jesus the remark: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God!"

"And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that He is one; and there is none other but He; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (*Mark* 12:28–34.)

JESUS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

A MAN'S greatest treasures are his ideals. They are the thoughts, the aims, the dream by which his life is fashioned and directed. They are his inward treasure, the light by which he lives. A man's life is according to his ideals, and according to their hold upon him. When we speak of an idealist, we mean a man to whom his ideals are the most precious thing in life, and on whom they have a hold above everything else — above material possession and advancement, even life itself.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: and hav-

ing found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it." (*Mat.* 13: 44–45.)

Like other treasures, then, ideals cannot be gotten nor held without a certain cost. The idealist must be ready to pay the price of his ideals, and usually it means facing the opposition and misunderstanding of his fellowmen. There is hardly an idealist who has not been forced to endure the antagonism of the world, and particularly the unhappiness of being misunderstood by it. Had the world understood its idealists, and had it sought to put into effect their teachings and visions, it would be different than it is. But the world has hardly ever really grasped what its ideal teachers meant to convey and to accomplish. This has formed the tragedy of idealists. Sooner or later it is the fate of every idealist to realize the distance between himself and the world, the difficulty of making himself understood, and

the remote chance of his words and visions finding fulfillment.

To this rule Jesus, the arch-idealist, was no exception. If ever man spurned the material and devoted himself to the promotion of the spiritual, it was he, and it would have been truly miraculous had his contemporaries received his doctrine with unanimous comprehension and approval.

We cannot read the life of Jesus, however, without concluding that very early in his ministry he realized the difficulty of his task. It did not take him long to learn that it was one thing to have discovered for oneself the spiritual character of Religion, and quite another thing to bring the truth home to others, and particularly to the mass of the people. Did all those that heard him really grasp the purpose and the inwardness of his words? His outward acts, his helpful performances, the multitude understood; they made him popular; but did they understand

his doctrine, which to him was the chief thing, the real bread of life? The loaves they appreciated; but how about the spiritual food? Worst of all, Jesus was not long in recognizing that even those closest to him, his chosen disciples, could not be depended upon for a real comprehension of what he was trying to do and say. "Are ye so without understanding also?" he demands. "Hear and understand!" This is his constant plea, and "Have ye understood all these things?" is the question he is repeatedly moved to ask his disciples, in one form or another. Time and again he has sought to make his purpose clear; but whether they have really understood is quite doubtful. It makes for the sadness of Jesus — for the sad undercurrent in many of his teachings and experiences.

The longer Jesus taught, the more convinced he grew of this futility — of this difficulty to communicate his spirit to others,

fully to share his ideal with others, to flood with the light of his doctrine those souls that had not received it themselves from the Father. "No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him."

In the early days of his teaching he certainly felt that it was possible for him, the son, to make known God, the Father. He conceived it his mission to do this. It is erroneous to think that Jesus was the first to introduce into the vocabulary of Israel the designation of God as Father. This appellation goes back to the Jewish Bible, and to Jesus it had become familiar from the Bible and many another Jewish writing, as well as from the prayers that were in every-day use among his people. "Our Father who art in heaven" was part of many a Jewish prayer of his day. But the designation of God as Father was Jesus' favorite form, expressing his basic and most intimate conception of his own and other men's relation-

ship to God. He was convinced that there was no such efficacious way of knowing God as through His child, Man, and no such certain way of knowing Man as through his Father, God. The conception was not new; it was common among his people; but it was personalized in him and became his profound conviction.

This conviction came to him from his own experience, and, in his enthusiasm, he dreamed of making this truth known to others, felt by others. But the longer he taught, the more deeply he realized that while the truth was there, it was not easy to make it clear to those to whom the Father — God — Himself had not revealed it. "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." Jesus

became more and more silent. Even his speech was half-silence. He spoke in half-words. He was convinced of the futility of explanation to people who could not understand, who could not perceive for themselves, who were blind to the light.

Nowhere do we find this confirmed more strongly than in the closing scenes of his life. In his trial before the high-priest, in his stand before Pilate, on the very cross — he does nothing so little as explain. "Jesus held his peace." He is the man of silence throughout. "He gave no answer, not even to one word." He is the man who has learnt the folly of trying to explain the incomprehensible, who has learnt the sorrow of misunderstanding. "Thou hast said." "Thou sayest." His final cry betrays it. It is addressed not to man, but to God — with whom he has been communing, sharing his thoughts — the Father whom it had been his aim to make known to others. "My God,

my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It is a cry out of the depths of a silent soul — a soul forced into the regions of silence by the misunderstanding, the incomprehension, of the world.

What we should bear in mind, however, is that it was natural for Jesus to have been misunderstood and opposed by his contemporaries, allowing for those peculiarities of human nature which have always existed and have not yet ceased.

At first, the public appearance of Jesus created surprise among those that knew him.

"Coming into his own country, he taught them in their Synagogue inasmuch that they were astonished and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom and these powers? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary and his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Judas, and his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence, then, hath this man all these things? And they were surprised in him." (*Mat.* 13: 54–57.)

Presently, however, surprise turned to resentment and antipathy. Jesus stood for something that differed radically from the conventional religion of the masses: he stood for prophetic religion as against mechanical religion, for a spiritual and not a material faith: he stood for Jewish mysticism rather than for Jewish politics. What more natural than that he should have aroused all kinds of discussion and opposition (which is the natural offspring of discussion)? "Some said he is a good man; others said nay, he deceiveth the people." To some he was a prophet, to others an imposter. Some thought him inspired, others queer. Some considered him a saint, others a doubtful character, a glutton and wine-bibber, hardly respectable, because he associated with publicans and was charitable to sinners.

"Whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the market places which call unto their fellows and say: We piped unto

ye and ye did not dance, we wailed and ye did not mourn. For John came neither eating nor drinking. and they say he hath a devil. The son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" (*Mat.* 11: 16–19.)

Indeed, there was so much doubt of Jesus' worth, and aspersion of his motives, that there were moments when the worst thing happened that can possibly befall the idealist: he began to question himself, trying to determine what his real character and commission were, and seeking an answer to those crucial questions from friends and disciples. It is a sad moment for the idealist when conflict and mistrust have served so to confuse him as to send him to others for a determination of his individuality.

As for the various leaders of the people, it was, again, quite natural for them to treat him either with aloofness or with hostility. The heads of the schools, who were

Pharisees, no doubt regarded him as an enthusiast, a detached preacher of ethical and spiritual religion, which in itself coincided with the ethical and spiritual purposes of the authorized teachers, notwithstanding his occasional attacks on old and commonly accepted laws. And as for the priestly class and the aristocrats, they treated him with the suspicion and hostility which his attitude to them, and his utterances, could not but provoke.

Since Jesus sought to teach and to do what he did, I say, it was natural that he should have encountered misunderstanding, suspicion, and hostility. But we ought not to forget that in this regard Jesus shared what thus far has proved the inevitable fate of all idealists, and what particularly had to be endured by most, if not all, the Prophets of Israel. Amos, Jeremiah, Elijah, Moses, and many others had to face no less a measure of misunderstanding and abuse.

Jeremiah depicts their common experience when he laments his own.

"O Lord, Thou hast enticed me, and I was enticed,
Thou hast overcome me, and hast prevailed;
I am become a laughing-stock all the day,
Every one mocketh me.
Because the word of the Lord is made
A reproach unto me, and a derision, all the day,
And if I say: 'I will not make mention of Him
Nor speak any more in His name,'
Then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
Shut up in my bones,
And I weary myself to hold it in,
But cannot."

Yet, it is just here that we witness one of the paradoxes of Jewish history, and, perhaps, of Jewish character. While the Jews persecuted and tormented their Prophets, they none the less, by some peculiar proclivity or predestination, respected them and their mission. There was always enough regard for the Prophet to make it possible for him to proclaim his message, no matter

how bitter a denunciation of the people it carried. The Jews were accustomed to the freedom of prophesying, and they preserved the prophetic castigations as part of their sacred literature.

This Jewish toleration of the Prophet, and of the ethical critic, attended Jesus. It made it possible for him to go about teaching in the synagogues and the Temple, and arguing with scribes and priests, despite the opposition he aroused. As a teacher of religion and morality, no one could interfere with him, even had his teachings been more revolutionary than they were. If later on Jesus died for his utterances or enterprises, it was certainly not because of anything he taught in connection with religion or ethics.

But Jesus was not merely tolerated by his Jewish contemporaries. By many of them he was treated with love, friendship, and tenderness.

One of the great errors usually commit-

ted is the assumption that from his Jewish contemporaries Jesus received nothing but hatred and perescution. The Jews are supposed to have made his life miserable and continually to have plotted to kill him. Of course, this peculiar notion dates back to the age of the Gospels. It is a strange peculiarity of the Gospels that the word "Jews" is constantly used in contrast to Jesus and his followers. But were not the latter also Jews? It betrays the anti-Jewish bias of the Gospels, the fact that they received their present form when antagonism already existed between the churches and the Jews, as well as an effort to please the non-Jewish world, for whom the Gospels were chiefly written, at the expense of the Jews. This peculiar notion has been perpetuated to this day. The Jews are all supposed to have been arrayed against Jesus.

As a matter of fact, the contrary is true. For an idealist, Jesus found more than the

common measure of appreciation among his Jewish contemporaries. As a teacher, he was not merely tolerated. By many he was loved. First, there were the crowds of which we hear repeatedly as thronging to him and hailing him as teacher and friend. They were all Jews. Then, there were his disciples: they were Jews. Then, there were his intimate friends, apart from those said to have been officially appointed as apostles. And, finally, there were the women who were devoted and ministered to him, and brought their children to be touched and blessed by him.

Was any teacher ever surrounded by so large a number of loving and loyal friends? And that in spite of the complete surrender he exacted. To be his disciple one had to give up everything, even kith and kin. Everything had to be sacrificed to the ideal.

"Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

"If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

"There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

Notwithstanding the severe test, the circle of Jesus' friends, apart from his official disciples, is both varied and interesting: Lazarus, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Zaccheus; and among the women, Mary and Martha (sisters of Lazarus), Mary of Magdala (out of whom went seven devils), Joanna (wife of Herod's steward), Susanna,

Salome: surely an array of friends, loyal and true, as has seldom been excelled; and they were all Jews. To think of this is to realize the foolishness of the assumption that Jesus failed to receive appreciation and love from his Jewish contemporaries.

"And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the report of him went forth into all Syria; and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with diverse sicknesses and torments, possessed with devils, and epileptics, and palsied, and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan."

Nor is it strange that Jesus should have gained such a following.

It was due, first of all, to the personal character of his teaching and work. Jesus differed in this respect from the majority of Jewish teachers. The latter, as a rule, were

interested in principles, in doctrines, in ideals; they taught impersonally: this is true from the Prophets down. Some regard it as the special merit of the Jewish method — this spiritual and ethical objectivity. Jesus taught personally. He pointed to himself not merely as an illustration of his teaching, but as an incarnation of it. When Moses addressed the Israelites, and wished to bring the thought of God home to them, he said: "The God of your fathers has sent me unto you!" Jesus, on the other hand, always spoke of his own God, his own Father. It was not a different idea; it was a change of emphasis, and the change was toward the accentuation of the personal element, Jesus' own personal interfusion with his teaching. The natural consequence was his personal appeal to his hearers, and the personal response of not a few.

There must be added, of course, the helpful healing power which Jesus exercised, and

which gained for him the gratitude and goodwill of many, as well as the ultimate reputation of a worker of miracles.

Moreover, that such a teacher should have won the friendship of Jewish women is also easy to understand, particularly if one thinks of the remarkable part that women played in the Jewish life of the time.

Some think that the presence of women in the story of Jesus marks a complete change in the position of woman in Israel. That, of course, is an error. One must not forget the great women of the Old Testament, nor of the Talmud, nor the fact that the pages of Josephus are crowded with references to women, and to their conspicuous part in the religious and political agitations of the time. Jewish women took part in the activity of Jesus, because they were accustomed to take part in the religious and political life of the people.

It is these friendships, of both men and women, that put sweetness and satisfaction into the life of Jesus. Always humble and unpretentious, always tolerant and human, always sensible of the mixture of frailty and divinity in human nature, he was grateful for signs of friendship, whatever their form. The hardest thing Jesus had to bear, as Padraic Pearse, the Irish poet, has pointed out, was the scattering of his friends. "Is it not a sad thing," asks the poet, "that every good fellowship is broken up? Even that little league of twelve in Galilee was broken full soon." Having learnt that it is the lot of the idealist to be misunderstood by most, Jesus was the more grateful for the few who were likely to understand — whose soul was likely to prove a good and fertile soil for the seed he was seeking to sow.

"Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the

birds came and devoured them: and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell upon the thorns; and the thorns grew up, and choked them: and others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He that hath ears, let him hear." (*Mat.* 13: 3–9.)

In the parable of the sower, we have a complete picture of the reception Jesus expected and found among his contemporaries. "Know ye not this parable, and how shall ye know all the parables?"

"Hear then ye the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the way side. And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straight-

way he stumbleth. And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that heareth the word; and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (*Mat.* 13: 18–23.)

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THE JEWISH MESSIAH IDEA AND JESUS

"How did Jesus become the Messiah? Here," says a French author, "is the paramount, the essential question in the conception of Jesus."

It is certainly true that with the idea of Jesus as the Messiah is bound up most of his history. Jesus may have been a unique personality and a unique religious teacher, but to the great majority of those who have accepted him through the ages he has been chiefly the Messiah, the Christ. Even today the question in regard to Jesus uppermost in the average mind is whether or no one acknowledges him as the Messiah. Equally true it is that it is impossible to understand the causes that led to the death of Jesus without considering the Jewish idea

of the Messiah and the relation of Jesus to it.

There are those who regard the messianic idea as the most beneficent contribution of the Jew to human life. Others try to prove that the idea of a Messiah, a redeemer, a final restorer and joy-bringer, was not confined to the Jewish people, but that, in one form or another, it existed among other early races. Certain it is that nowhere the idea of a Messiah came to play as important a part as in Israel. Among the Jews it assumed a central place in the order of life and faith. Moreover, from Israel it was taken over by others, serving as the core of religion to uncounted millions. With non-Jews the idea has undergone many modifications, some of a radical nature. But it originated among the Jews, and among them also it passed through a process of development before it received the form and the force it possessed in the age of Jesus.

It is important to understand the influence the Jewish idea of the Messiah exercised on Jesus, and the attitude he took to it. But we can hope to understand it only by tracing its development among the Jews.

The origin of the idea of a Messiah we find in the teachings and visions of the Jewish Prophets.

We know that the Prophets were first and last teachers of Righteousness. As such they frequently had to perform the unpleasant task of criticizing their people, of rebuking it severely for moral and spiritual transgressions. Sometimes we are told that the Prophets were political leaders. But their interest in politics was inspired altogether by religious and ethical motives. To the Prophets the chief concern of life was Righteousness and their intercession in the political life of their people was for the purpose of vindicating or advancing the demands of Righteousness. An unrighteous Israel to

them was a disloyal and treacherous Israel, for the reason that God was the true king of Israel, and God was a God of Righteousness, or of Holiness, who expected the same qualities of His people, and particularly of the rulers, the kings of the people, regarded as God's representatives on earth and anointed as such. For this reason the Prophets were moved to castigate their people, and even to predict its fall and destruction, because of its unfaithfulness.

On the other hand, however, the Prophets loved their people and were convinced that God's choice and love, once bestowed upon Israel, were everlasting.

> "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
> How shall I surrender thee, Israel?
> My heart is turned within Me,
> My compassions are kindled together!"

God's love was stronger than His wrath. Even after periods of faithlessness and forsaking, there was bound to be a renewal of

the old love, the old faith, the old covenant.

"And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever;
Yea, I will betroth thee unto Me,
In righteousness, and in justice,
And in lovingkindness, and in compassion.
And I will betroth thee unto Me
In faithfulness:
And thou shalt know the Lord!"

This conviction of the Prophets inspired them with hope, and, amid visions of destruction and desolation, it caused them to raise sanguine eyes to the future, however distant. "In the end of days it shall come to pass"— this vision ever and anon formed for the Prophets a wondrous antidote to the bitterness of the present.

"In the end of days!" What was to happen in the end of days? In those days there would be a restoration of Israel, a restoration of the rule of righteousness, a restoration of the covenant between God and

His people, a renewal of the reign of peace, justice, charity, and happiness. The ruler of those days would be the true king, the true representative of God, the true Anointed (or, Messiah). Before the advent of that messianic age, the world would witness much suffering and tribulation, there would be the day of Judgment — the Day of the Lord — many would be sifted out and only a residue would remain, but the glorious age in the end would compensate for all the troubles and miseries of the past, and, as its blessings will extend to all nations, Israel will by his afflictions and bruises have benefited not only himself but all mankind. It is in some such way as this that the Prophets thought and dreamed of the future, and thus they created the messianic idea, which came to play so vital a part in Jewish history.

One cannot help realizing that with the Prophets this idea was almost unconscious. It was a natural sequel of their belief in

the future of their people, in the eternity of the Divine Covenant. This Covenant was bound to reassert itself when the people had suffered sufficiently for — had expiated — its faithlessness. It was part of the inevitable triumph of love, as Hosea conceived it, over temporary estrangement and infidelity. Granted the faith and the vision of the Prophets, we can see how natural to them was the messianic hope.

Of course, to each of the Prophets, according to temperament, certain features of the future stood out most conspicuous and alluring. To Isaiah it was the coming of a perfect ruler, different from the timid, vacillating, and inconfident king with whom he dealt at the Court of Jerusalem; to Jeremiah, one of the most spiritual and subjective — one of the most lyrical — of Prophets, it meant the actualization of personal religion, religion as an inward revelation and power, as a covenant not taught by man to man, but

written deep in every man's heart; to Micah it signified the consummation of the real meaning of religion in all its moral grandeur and simplicity and the interlinking of nations in the chains of peace and good will: and so forth for each of the Prophets, according to his particular predisposition and, perhaps, according to the peculiar conditions of his age. But to every one of them the messianic hope and conviction as such was a natural, a wellnigh if not wholly unconscious, result of his faith in the indestructible character of his people and of the Divine Covenant with it.

In the course of time, however, the messianic idea became the subject of conscious speculation and minute discussion. As people began to realize that Israel had suffered beyond measure and none the less the perfect age and final restoration had not arrived, they began to employ their minds on the old prophecies. They began to calculate when

the messianic age finally would come, to speculate as to just what its nature would be, and to look for the man who might bring it about.

It is easy to conceive the conditions likely to engender such studies and to stimulate such speculation. Such conditions arose in times of persecution, of warfare, of uncommon struggle and distress. No wonder, then, that the first extant result of such speculations we have in the book of Daniel, which was probably written in the days of the Maccabean revolt. This book is not only itself an attempt to forecast the messianic age, but it started a whole literature similarly employed. In this literature — the apocalyptic books — and in the subsequent rabbinical writings we find traces of the several forms that the messianic idea gradually assumed in Israel.

It is a mistake to think that all Jews had the same idea on the subject. Uniformity

was never an intellectual or spiritual characteristic of the Jews. They all hoped for a messianic time; all believed in it, yearned for it. But as to its character, there was variation.

There were, at least, three different interpretations. First, there was the purely political expectation — that of a perfect emancipator and ruler of Israel. Then, there was the construction of those who, tired of waiting for an earthly paradise, transferred their hopes for the future to heaven, to the hereafter. And, finally, there was the view of those who attached little importance to political schemes and fastened their whole attention on Religion and its tasks, regarding them as the whole and sole concern of man. All these groups were hoping for the Kingdom of God, as the messianic age was designated, but to the different groups the Kingdom of God connoted different things, though no doubt there were some

to whom they meant all these things together.

The messianic hope envisaging a perfect ruler we find expressed, for example, in the Psalms of Solomon, which were probably composed about a half century before Jesus.

"Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the son of David,
At the time in which Thou seest, O God, that he may reign over Israel Thy servant.
And gird him with strength, that he may shatter unrighteous rulers,
And that he may purge Jerusalem from nations that trample her down to destruction.
Wisely, righteously he shall thrust out sinners from the inheritance,
He shall destroy the pride of the sinner as a potter's vessel.
With a rod of iron he shall break in pieces all their substance,
He shall destroy the godless nations with the word of his mouth;
At his rebuke nations shall flee before him,
And he shall reprove sinners for the thoughts of their heart.

"And he shall gather together a holy people, whom he shall lead in righteousness.
And he shall judge the tribes of the people that has been sanctified by the Lord his God.
And he shall not suffer unrighteousness to lodge any more in their midst,
Nor shall there dwell with them any man that knoweth wickedness,
For he shall know them, that they are all sons of their God.
And he shall divide them according to their tribes upon the land,
And neither sojourner nor alien shall sojourn with them any more.
He shall judge peoples and nations in the wisdom of his righteousness.

"And he shall have the heathen nations to serve him under his yoke;
And he shall glorify the Lord in a place to be seen of all the earth;
And he shall purge Jerusalem, making it holy as of old:
So that nations shall come from the ends of the earth to see his glory,
Bringing as gifts her sons who had fainted,

And to see the glory of the Lord, wherewith God hath glorified her.
And he shall be a righteous king, taught of God, over them,
And there shall be no unrighteousness in his days in their midst,
For all shall be holy and their king the anointed of the Lord.
For he shall not put his trust in horse and rider and bow,
Nor shall he multiply for himself gold and silver for war,
Nor shall he gather confidence from a multitude for the day of battle,
The Lord Himself is his king, the hope of him that is mighty through his hope in God.

"For he will smite the earth with the word of his mouth for ever.
He will bless the people of the Lord with wisdom and gladness,
And he himself will be pure from sin, so that he may rule a great people.
He will rebuke rulers, and remove sinners by the might of his word;
And relying upon his God, throughout his days he will not stumble;

For God will make him mighty by means of His holy spirit,
And wise by means of the spirit of understanding, with strength and righteousness.
And the blessing of the Lord will be with him: he will be strong and stumble not;
His hope will be in the Lord: who then can prevail against him?
He will be mighty in his works, and strong in the fear of God,
He will be shepherding the flock of the Lord faithfully and righteously,
And will suffer none among them to stumble in their pasture.
He will lead them aright,
And there will be no pride among them that any among them should be oppressed.

"This will be the majesty of the king of Israel whom God knoweth;
He will raise him up over the house of Israel to correct him.
His words shall be more refined than costly gold, the choicest;
In the assemblies he will judge the peoples, the tribes of the sanctified.

His words shall be like the words of the holy ones in the midst of sanctified peoples.
Blessed be they that shall be in those days,
In that they shall see the good fortune of Israel which God shall bring to pass in the gathering together of the tribes.
May the Lord hasten His mercy upon Israel!
May He deliver us from the uncleanness of unholy enemies!"

A good illustration of the messianic despair of the material world and a withdrawal into the spiritual realm, we find in the Fourth Book of Ezra, which was probably written in the first century of the Christian era.

"For the world has lost its youth,
The times begin to wax old.
Now, therefore, set in order thy house, and reprove thy people;
Comfort the lowly among them, and instruct those that are wise.
Now do thou renounce the life that is corruptible, let go from thee the cares of mortality; cast from thee the burdens of man, put off now the weak nature; lay aside thy burdensome cares, and hasten to remove from these times!

For still worse evils than those which thou hast seen happen shall yet take place. For the weaker the world grows through age, so much the more shall evils increase upon the dwellers on earth.

Truth shall withdraw further off, and falsehood be nigh at hand."

Again:

"Behold the days come, and it shall be.

When I am about to draw nigh to visit the dwellers upon earth,

And when I require from the doers of iniquity the penalty of their iniquity;

And when the Age which is about to pass away shall be sealed, then will I show these signs: the books shall be opened before the face of the firmament, and all see together.

And one-year-old children shall speak with their voices; pregnant women shall bring forth untimely births at three or four months, and these shall live and dance. And suddenly shall the sown places appear unsown, and the full storehouses shall suddenly be found empty. And the trumpet shall sound aloud, at which all men, when they hear it, shall be struck with sudden fear. And at that

time friends shall war against friends like enemies, the earth shall be stricken with fear together with the dwellers thereon, and the springs of the fountains shall stand still so that for three hours they shall not run.

And it shall be whosoever shall have survived all these things that I have foretold unto thee, he shall be saved and shall see my salvation and the end of my world. And the men who have been taken up, who have not tasted death from their birth, shall appear. Then shall the heart of the inhabitants of the world be changed, and be converted to a different spirit.

For evil shall be blotted out, and deceit extinguished;

Faithfulness shall flourish, and corruption be vanquished;

And truth which for so long a time has been without fruit, shall be made manifest."

Finally, in the Book of Enoch, composed in the first century before Jesus, we have a good picture of the heavenly Messianic Kingdom.

"And there I saw another vision, the dwelling-places of the holy,
And the resting-places of the righteous.

"Here mine eyes saw their dwellings with His righteous angels,
And their resting-places with the holy.

"And they petitioned and interceded and prayed for the children of men,
And righteousness flowed before them as water,
And mercy like dew upon the earth:
Thus it is amongst them for ever and ever.

"And in that place mine eyes saw the Elect One of righteousness and of faith,
And I saw his dwelling-place under the wings of the Lord of Spirits,
And righteousness shall prevail in his days,
And the righteous and elect shall be without number before Him for ever and ever.
And all the righteous and elect before Him shall be strong as fiery lights,
And their mouth shall be full of blessing.

"And their lips extol the name of the Lord of Spirits,
And righteousness before Him shall never fail,
And uprightness shall never fail before Him.
There I wished to dwell,
And my spirit longed for that dwelling-place:
And there heretofore hath been my portion.
For so has it been established concerning me before the Lord of Spirits."

Now, the thing to bear in mind is that the age of Jesus was a time when all these interpretations of the messianic idea were found side by side and fought for recognition. For that there was ample reason. For centuries the Jews had suffered all kinds of political persecution and tribulation. One after the other, their own rulers failed them, their most brilliant hopes were extinguished. The Maccabean dynasty, first hailed as messianic, deteriorated disgracefully. The reign of Herod was a mixture of cruelty and scandal. The rule of Rome was intolerable. It was a time of intrigue and tyranny. No

wonder the hope for the messianic day became intense, and no wonder different men held different ideas as to what it would be. Some waited for the political redeemer; others said, Oh, no, it means scorn of material things and engrossment in spiritual realities, while still others turned their eyes to heaven, hoping there to find reward, harmony, and peace.

A time came, some years after Jesus, when the Jews grew weary of speculation and left the coming of the Messiah to God. The failure of numerous attempts at political emancipation had worn them out. There was nothing to do but wait for God's own time. Faith took the place of human effort. Indeed, certain rabbis declared it sinful to try by human effort to hasten the advent of the Messiah. "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem," they quoted from The Song of Songs, "that ye awaken not, nor stir up love, until it please." This they interpreted

as a Divine protest against hastening the Messiah by human means. "When Divine Justice considers the time ripe, I shall cause the day of Love to come with many voices, and I shall not delay." Such redemption, held the rabbis, would be permanent. "Said the Holy One blessed be He, Hitherto ye have been redeemed by flesh and blood, and ye have been returned time and again to servitude in exile, but in the days to come you shall be redeemed by the Holy One with an everlasting redemption after which there shall be no servitude. As it is written:

'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
And come with singing unto Zion,
And everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
They shall obtain gladness and joy,
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away;'

and also:

"'Israel shall be helped by the Lord with an everlasting redemption.'"

The relegation of the Messianic day to the remote realm of faith, however, occurred

after the age of Jesus. In the days of Jesus, the different currents of messianic expectation met together — they formed the messianic whirlpool of the times.

What attitude did Jesus take to those ideas? Of one thing, no doubt, he was convinced from the outset, namely, that the kingdom of God was at hand. It was this teaching of John the Baptist that inspired him to enter upon his public ministry, having hitherto lived and taught more or less privately — preferably privately. (He never quite outgrew the reluctance to reach "the multitude.") When he began to teach broadcast, this was his message: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the good tidings!" Nor did his message fail of a hearing. For many reasons he drew multitudes. His own personality, as well as the temper of the times, gained him hearers.

Ere long, however, he was called upon to answer two questions of vital import. First, what was to be the nature of the kingdom that was at hand, as he said it was? And, secondly, what was his own relation to the kingdom that he forecast, his own place in it? It is easy enough to ridicule the people of the time for having asked such questions, to scorn them as men of little faith, and such-like; but no reasonable person will deny that they were most natural questions from people as vitally concerned as were the Jews of the time.

Jesus himself felt that he had to answer those questions. He had to decide — not only for others, but for himself. A private person might harbor vague notions about vital questions. But the public teacher may not. He must decide. It was the necessity of decision on that vital point of his ministry that created the crisis in the life of Jesus.

He began to wonder — to reason — to

ask others. What did the Messiah mean? What did the Kingdom mean? And what was he himself with respect to it? "Who do men say that I am? Who say ye that I am?" Simon Peter (one of his closest disciples) answered, "Thou art the Messiah!" We do not know whether that answer at first pleased Jesus or no, or whether the suggestion that he was the Messiah first came from his disciples, or whether he made it to them. Certain it is that he was reticent about it and asked his disciples at first to say nothing about it.

"And Jesus went forth, and his disciples, into the village of Caesarea Philippi: and in the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist: and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should tell no man of him." (*Mark* 8, 27–30)

When finally Jesus reached a decision, it was true to the ruling thought of his life. It was spiritual. The Kingdom of God, he decided, was not political, it was not of this world: it was spiritual.

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo! here; or Lo! there. For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you!"

The Kingdom of God is already here — for those that understand, and for those that do not understand, why, one must pray for its coming. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth!" As for himself, he decided, if to realize inwardly the kingdom of God meant to be the Messiah, the Anointed of God, God's Son, he was the Messiah.

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by

the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake the saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men. And he called unto him the multitude with his disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" (*Mark* 8, 31–36)

No doubt it meant a great relief for Jesus to harmonize his inmost convictions with the messianic passion of the age. But, on the other hand, it involved him in the most tragic misunderstanding of his career. If his other teachings were so often misunderstood — at times even by his closest disciples — how much more likely was this one to be misunderstood, touching as it did the most sensi-

tive spot in the life of the age! The multitude that had been fired to believe that here at last was a true deliverer, the Messiah they had hoped for, turned away from him, disappointed, disillusioned, embittered. One of his own disciples turned against him — betrayed him. On the other hand, the rulers, hearing that he had proclaimed himself Messiah, and having had experience with other self-styled messiahs, decided to hand him over to the Roman authorities, lest the whole people be charged with rebellion. They were not in a mood — perhaps they had no taste — for fine spiritual analysis. Thus, Jesus lost his life in the messianic maelstrom of his age.

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THE JEWS AND THE DEATH OF JESUS

PROFESSOR GRAETZ has said that Jesus is the only human being of whom it may be said without exaggeration that he achieved more by his death than by his life.

It is certainly remarkable to what extent the world's attention has been focused on the death, rather than the life, of Jesus. Among Christians there is no doubt a much larger number of such as regard the death of Jesus as the core of their faith than of those who concentrate on his life and teachings. Moreover, none will deny that a great deal of the world's feeling against the Jews has been fed by the belief that they were responsible for the death of Jesus. It is paradoxical, but true that even those who treat the self-sacrifice of Jesus as essential

to the universal scheme of salvation, are yet hostile to the Jews, because they are held to have brought about that self-sacrifice. It is therefore important to determine the part that the Jews had in the death of Jesus and also to what it was due.

Unfortunately, it is far from easy to do so. If most of the incidents of Jesus' life are known but vaguely, if the greater part of his life is practically unknown, what we know about the causes that led up to his death is equally uncertain and based to a large extent on conjecture. And this for the very simple reason that the accounts we possess are obscure, conflicting, and incomplete.

It is peculiar and regrettable that there is no reference to Jesus in the literature of his own age. Neither his life nor his death is mentioned in the Talmudic portions of his period. What references there are in the Talmud to Jesus originated later on, and

are in themselves so obscure and doubtful as to be of very little historic value. There is no reference to Jesus in the works of the Jewish philosopher Philo, nor in the historical writings of Josephus, though both lived in the first century, the former in Alexandria and the latter in Jerusalem and in Rome, and both were well-informed. It is well-known that one sentence on the subject in Josephus is universally considered a later interpolation, made no doubt by a Christian writer eager to remedy the obnoxious omission. Whatever the cause, the silence of contemporary Jewish literature in regard to Jesus is unfortunate for the study of the subject.

Our only source of information on the death of Jesus are the Gospels. But the accounts contained in them vary. There are differences between the Synoptic Gospels, on the one hand, and the Gospel of John, on the other. Minor differences occur even in

the Synoptic Gospels, particularly in the description of the trials of Jesus. Evidently the accounts were written many years after the Crucifixion. None of the writers had himself been present at the trials, at least not at the Jewish trial, though perhaps John (if he was the beloved disciple) was present at the Crucifixion. What they wrote about the Jewish trial of Jesus — or the circumstances leading up to the Crucifixion — was based on hearsay, opinion, and tradition. By the time they committed their accounts to writing, moreover, the church had already been founded, dogmas on the subject of the character and the fate of Jesus had been formulated, and many a controversy between the Jews and the founders of the new sect had taken place. The narration of the death of Jesus no longer was a mere question of history, but of religious interpretation and argument. What wonder that the diverse accounts should be more or less at variance,

obscure, and incomplete, and that we of to-day should find it difficult to determine just what really happened to bring about the death of Jesus?

One thing seems certain. Jesus, within a few days before his death, suffered a most complete change of fortune. I have had occasion to point out that the strange thing in the life of Jesus is not that he encountered so much misunderstanding and hostility, but rather that he enjoyed such great popularity with the multitude.

Jesus was an idealist. He interpreted life in terms of spirit. He scorned and smashed the idols of the masses. Such a man could scarcely hope for universal recognition and approval. Jesus himself felt it. He was constantly haunted by the apprehension that even those that hung on his lips did not really perceive the inner meaning of his words. Time and again he questioned his closest disciples as to whether they understood what

he was trying to say, and more than once disciples left him as a result of his scrutiny. All this is perfectly in accord with the usual fate of the idealist.

The strange thing about Jesus, however, is that he should have gained such marked popularity. It is an indication of what power of attraction his personality possessed, and, also, of the strong appeal of his message to his age, with its unusual spiritual and political unrest. This popularity seems to have increased particularly in the closing days of his life.

Perhaps it was due to his self-association with the messianic movement. No matter what construction he put on the word Messiah, and on the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven: those were the things the people dreamed of, desired, and discussed more than any other, and the self-identification of a young, enthusiastic, and cherished leader with them was bound to enhance his popu-

larity. Was he thinking of one thing when he spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and was the multitude thinking of another? That is what formed the tragedy. But that identification with the Messianic thought increased his hold on the people, we cannot doubt.

Jesus' last entry into Jerusalem was triumphal. It was different from that of the Galilean dreamer and enthusiast of former days. It was that of a hero! The people waved palm branches before him and his followers, and hailed him leader.

"And many spread their garments upon the way; and others branches, which they had cut from the fields. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David: Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus was at the height of his power. It was on the Sunday before Passover. The

city was full of pilgrims from all over the country. Pilate, the governor, was there with his soldiers, on the lookout for signs of revolt, which had grown rather frequent. Jesus was more outspoken and aggressive than ever. He taught in the synagogue of the city and in the Temple; he not only denounced the merchants and moneychangers that had their stalls in the Temple, but drove them out; he affirmed his authority against priests and scribes: in every way he showed that he was in a state of excitement and the hero of the hour.

Yet, within a couple of days, all this is changed. His own exultation gives way to depression; he realizes that the end of his earthly career is near; he catches wind of a plot forming against him, with one of his own disciples betraying him; and forthwith he finds himself deserted by the multitude that had but just hailed his coming; his activity is stopped, he is seized, abused, and

crucified, with the loud approval of the multitude.

What was behind this terrible change? What was the cause of it all? The answer we must seek in the accounts of the Gospels concerning the trial of Jesus. Were these accounts clear and consistent, we should know definitely why the people suddenly turned against Jesus and why a few days after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem he was crucified. But there's the rub. The stories of the Gospels are inadequate and confusing.

Who tried Jesus? When was he tried? Was he tried by the full Sanhedrin of seventy-one, or by a smaller Sanhedrin of twenty-three, or was there no trial by the Sanhedrin at all? Was he tried by the Sanhedrin at night, or in early morning? What were the charges against him, and by whom were they brought? Of what was he convicted by the Jewish court — of calling himself

Messiah, of blaspheming, or of what? Was he crucified on the eve of Passover or on the first day of Passover?

The very fact that there has been no end of debate of these crucial points shows how doubtful and deficient are the accounts of the Gospels. The author of the latest book on the subject reaches the conclusion that the Sanhedrin merely acted as an investigating body in regard to the charges brought against Jesus, whereas the actual trial took place before Pilate, who, as Roman governor, had sole right of jurisdiction and punishment, and that both the investigation and the trial, as well as the execution, were perfectly legal and in accord with Roman procedure. But, on the other hand, is it not noteworthy that the Gospel of John, which is particularly full in the narration of the last scenes of Jesus' life, has nothing to say about a trial by a Jewish court? It is ex-

tremely difficult to draw definite information from the Gospels about the Jewish trial of Jesus.

What we know of Jewish legal procedure and religious observance makes it most improbable that Jesus was tried by the Sanhedrin. First, it would have been most unusual that the Sanhedrin should have been summoned in the middle of the night. Secondly, no man could have been tried for his life at a night session, unless the trial had gone on during the preceding day. Thirdly, the trial and the Crucifixion are supposed to have taken place on the night and the day of the first day of Passover, which is quite out of the question in view of the holiness of the day. The Jewish trial described in the Gospels is so full of irregularities and improbabilities that we may well assume that it represents a later assumption rather than an actual fact.

On the other hand, it seems most probable that Jesus was seized by the Roman government and tried and executed by the orders of Pilate. Indeed, this is all that Tacitus, in his Annals, written in the closing years of the first century, has to say about the death of Jesus. Referring to the Christians, he says that they are called thus from Christ, who was executed by Pilate in the reign of Tiberius.

When the Gospels, however, were composed, Pilate had become an almost pious figure — a wellnigh Christian soul: efforts were made to exculpate him as far as possible, to minimize his share in the Crucifixion. He is represented as trying to release Jesus, and even his wife is brought in, pleading with him to the same effect. He is made to wash his hands, Jewish fashion, as a symbol of his rejection of all responsibility.

There can be little doubt that this coloring of the story of the Crucifixion was inspired

by consideration for the Roman world and by animosity to the Jews who so resolutely declined to accept the new religion.

In reality, there seems no reason to doubt that Pilate, hearing of Jesus, regarded him as a new claimant to the part of Messiah, of the kind he had learnt to fear as chiefs of rebellion. As it was the season of Passover, when the city was full of pilgrims and of national enthusiasm, his fears grew the worse. He, therefore, ordered the arrest of the new leader and his immediate trial and execution.

As portrayed in the Gospels, one would think that Pilate was on the one hand a saint, and, on the other, a coward. As a saint, he discerns the innocence of Jesus and tries to save him; as a coward, he is afraid of the Jews, and yields to them. This depiction is altogether out of accord with the characterization of Pilate given by contemporary historians. Both Philo and Josephus

describe him as cruel, tyrannical, and arbitrary, and in most sacred matters heedless of the traditions and pleadings of the Jewish people. His rule of Palestine often led to outbreaks and he did not hesitate to order massacres of the people. It is altogether improbable that he should have so far deviated from his customary conduct as to plead for the release of a man charged with rebellion, or that he should have been unable to release him had he chosen so to do. Of course, it is quite likely that Jesus was denounced to Pilate, or that Pilate was aided, by some of the Jewish rulers. The priests and officers of the Jews had reason to oppose Jesus and to fear his activity. But the actual arrest and trial of Jesus were no doubt conducted by Pilate in accordance with his usual methods.

This assumption is confirmed by the following circumstances.

First, the captors of Jesus are said not to

have known him personally, and it required the betrayal of one of his disciples to identify him. Is it possible that a man who had grown so well known in Jerusalem, should have remained a total stranger to Jewish officers? It is possible, however, if those arresting him were Roman officers come to the city for the occasion.

Secondly, the charge on which Pilate tries Jesus is that of being the Messiah — the King of the Jews. It is the only question that interested Pilate. On the other hand, it could not form the cause for a criminal trial from the Jewish point of view. It might have been thought madness, it was no crime, to call oneself a king or to represent oneself as redeemer of one's people.

Thirdly, the form of Jesus' execution was Roman, not Jewish. The Jews did not know of crucifixion until the Romans brought it to Palestine. Varus, according to Josephus, crucified two thousand Jews at once, while

Titus is said to have crucified so many that "room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies." What the Jews tried to do was to mitigate the horrors of crucifixion by allaying its pain and hastening death.

Fourthly, the Crucifixion was attended by jeers of Roman soldiers, mocking Jesus for playing the Messiah, while on the Cross Pilate ordered the inscription: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, which he insisted on keeping there even when the Jews protested against it and its implications.

Amid the uncertainties one thing stands out, namely, the spirit in which Jesus met both his trial and his death. Whatever doubts and speculations the Messiah-idea may have engendered within him, whatever futile efforts he may have made as leader of the people, at the last moment his old self reasserted itself. He felt afresh, and more

strongly than ever, that his kingdom was not of this world, that true power was not material but spiritual, and that he was at one with his Father. Above all, he felt again what his years of teaching had taught him that it was useless to try to explain spiritual truth to such as did not perceive it by themselves. When Pilate questions him about his being King of the Jews, Jesus asks for the source of his information. "Knowest thou it of thyself or have others told thee it of me?" It was not irony, as is commonly assumed: it was a reflection of Jesus' inmost thought. The high-priest is answered in the same way.

"The high priest therefore asked Jesus of his disciples and of his teaching. Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world; I ever taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and in secret spake I nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them that have heard me, what I spake unto them: behold, these know the things which I said."

One's own knowledge is the only knowledge that counts. It is the only knowledge that reveals the truth. And his last word is that those that know the truth shall hear him. Only his agony wrings from him the cry: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" But He is his God still. And it certainly is in tune with his whole character and course — with his sad realization of people's imperfect understanding, his exaltation of the spirit, his ever-present sense of union with his Father — to close his life with the words: "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do," and, with his last breath, to call aloud those fine Hebrew words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!"

"Father."

"They know not."

"Into Thy hands I commend my spirit." In these sentences we have a summary of the life and death of Jesus.

JESUS AND JEWISH HISTORY

OFTEN one wonders why Jesus has played so small a part in Jewish history. In the Jewish literature of his own time there is no mention of him, and such references as are found in later talmudic passages are meager and of doubtful value. They are vague allusions to Jesus, or traditions about him, rather than direct citations of his work and teachings. Some people grow indignant at the thought that those sparse allusions are not very appreciative or reverential. But it is foolish wrath. Those passages in themselves were the result of controversy and bitterness, and are no more hostile to Jesus than many a passage found in the Gospels and attributed to Jesus (as the result no doubt of similar conditions) are to the Jews. People also wonder why in subsequent ages

the Jews had made so little of Jesus, seeing that, after all, he was one of their own, and had so continually addressed himself to them and their spiritual welfare. This question we can answer only by taking a look at the course of Jewish history, insofar as Jesus is related to it.

One thing must be clear to any one at all acquainted with the history of Jewish thought. Jesus could not possibly have been excluded from Jewish history, nor ignored by it, for the mere reason that he was a reformer, or that he thought and taught about religion in a way different from others, nor because he criticized his contemporaries. In that respect, he was not so unique among the Jews as to have incurred the punishment of silence at the hands of his contemporaries or of history.

The Jews believed in individuality of teaching, in freedom of expression, and,

though they may not have accepted a teacher's opinion, they listened to what he had to say. The whole Talmud owes its origin and bulk to this very characteristic, and to the extent to which it was applied.

Even excommunication for overmuch individuality of expression or eccentricity of practice could not have removed Jesus from the history of his time. There are instances of some of the greatest scholars of the Talmud being excommunicated by their colleagues; one of the most eminent and most popular of them all — Eleazer ben Hyrcanos, in the first half of the second century — died excommunicate; yet their names were not blotted out, nor did they cease being cited afterwards. Over three hundred and thirty utterances of Eleazer ben Hyrcanos are cited in the Mishnah, the basic portion of the Talmud. His illustrious contemporary, Akabiah ben Mahalalel, also was excommunicated for not yielding to the majority,

which at that particular time formed a new rule.

Neither could Jesus' self-declaration as Messiah have blotted his name from the annals of his people. Others have called themselves Messiah, and Jewish history has taken account of them and their followers, even though their enterprises and pretensions proved pitiable failures. When in the second century Bar Kochba announced himself as the Messiah and led a revolt against Rome, Akiba, one of the foremost rabbis of the age (and no doubt others also), supported him — and though Bar Kochba's messiahship collapsed, Jewish history has not made it a reproach against Akiba that he supported the temporary leader. There are similar instances in later Jewish history.

If Jesus's appearance and disappearance were followed by silence, it was due to two causes.

First of all, to the character of his own personality. He himself was a silent man. He was not a man of the multitude, save through the necessity of his ideal and the peculiar circumstances of his age that thrust him into the public current. "Seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain." "Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side." Jesus was a man of silence, and such a man is followed by silence when he leaves the world. As soon as the multitude observed that he was different than they, that his words were different, that his thoughts and purposes were different, they turned away and left him to himself. He was none of them, and little did they care about finding out what he really meant. As for the schools and their leaders, he never had been one of them; though in teaching he used at times their methods, he was apart from them: no wonder they did not cite him.

That was the first cause of silence. The second lay in the conditions which put Jesus forth as the founder and protagonist of a new faith.

It is well to remember that Jesus died a Jew, and not a Christian. His last prayers were Jewish, hallowed by Jewish tradition and usage. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" "Into Thy hands I commend my Spirit!" He died a Jew, having no idea that he was destined to be called the founder of a new faith, to supersede or destroy his own. That this part fell to him was due entirely to the small group of men and women that had followed him and stood by him to the last, because they loved him.

If Christianity is a religion of love, as is commonly affirmed, it is such for no reason so truly as that which brought it into being. Lovers of Jesus, in the literal sense, formed the first band of Christians; simple folk, who had followed Jesus with their hearts, rather

than their heads, who probably knew little, and cared less, about the doctrinal implications of his utterances, but who gave themselves to him because they loved him for what he was, for himself, loved him with a love that passeth understanding. And he loved them for this very simplicity of trust, for this very lack of pretense, having realized the emptiness of pretense and the hypocrisy of priestly and academic pomp.

It is those simple, loving, devoted men and women — some of whom had silently wept at the Cross — that were first of all responsible for the perpetuation of the name of Jesus. His death made their attachment the more intense. That also is part of love. True love is deepened and strengthened by misfortune. True love is sublimated by suffering. It feeds on tragedy, which is the grave of false love.

"For love is strong as Death,
A very flame of the Lord!"

The multitude — the mob — that had waved palm branches before Jesus when they took him for a king who was going to make them free and happy, deserted him when they saw him a martyr. But those that truly loved him, loved him the more for his Passion. Love said he was the true Messiah, the suffering Messiah, the self-sacrificing Messiah. It was this band of loyal men and women that thus saved the name of Jesus from oblivion. Whether Jesus would have approved their conception of him as the Messiah, or whether it meant to them what later it came to mean, is quite apart. It was they who made the name of Jesus immortal.

Naturally their number grew, but the most important addition to their ranks they gained when joined by Paul.

Paul was the intellectual founder of the Christian religion. His adoption of his peculiar theory about Jesus and the nature of

religion, marked one of the most significant moments in the spiritual history of the world. Paul was an intellectual giant. Had he not founded the Christian church, he might have become one of the greatest rabbis. He had had the training of a rabbi, had lived the life of one, and his entire method of teaching and debate was that of the brilliant rabbis of the time. He is all intellect, though he speaks of love and grace. With all the weapons of the intellect, he fights against the intellect in Religion. At first, it would appear, that he was a zealous opponent of the followers of Jesus. Contact with them, though hostile, probably led him to marvel at their devotion and thus to ponder on Jesus, and finally to his own conclusion about Jesus.

Paul's conclusion was that Jesus was the Messiah, that after the Crucifixion he was resurrected, that his resurrection was a sign of his messiahship, and that Jesus thus had

become the savior of the world. To believe in Jesus was to be saved. It was the new miracle, which heralded the abrogation of the old Law. The old Law was dead. It had become nothing but a stumbling-block. Faith was to take its place, and namely faith in Jesus. Whoever believed in Jesus, was saved, no matter whether he observed the Law or no. Jesus is first and last. Nothing else counts. Once Paul had embraced this theory, he brought to bear the power of his intellect and the brilliancy of his style on the task of persuading others. He became the fanatic exponent of his idea. He traveled from place to place in pursuit of converts. And it was by him and his disciples that many Christian communities were founded both in Palestine and elsewhere — all the way to Athens and Rome.

It was perfectly natural that very serious differences on the subject of Jesus should crop up among those early Christian communities.

Paul's policy was to be all things to all men — in other words, to connive at all manner of unimportant differences, for the sake of his chief object — the recognition of Jesus. But some of the differences were fundamental and were due to the origin of the several communities.

On the one hand, there were the Christians sprung from among the Jews; on the other, there were the pagan converts. It would have been idle to expect that all of them should understand the character and function of Jesus alike. Nor did they. The Jewish Christians had one conception of Jesus; the pagan Christians quite another. To the former Jews, Jesus was a great man, descended of David, a noble teacher, a lover of the poor and of poverty, who would some day return and finish the work he had begun and interrupted by his death. Their name, Ebionites, from the Hebrew for "poor," probably indicated both their class and character. They

came from among the lowly, the humble, the needy, whose godliness the Psalmists had sung — the poor in spirit whom Jesus had called blessed. To the pagan converts, on the other hand, what could a descendant of David mean? To them Jesus became the actual son of God, miraculously begotten, and sacrificed for the redemption of the world. It was such ideas as these that not only separated the Ebionites (or Jewish Christians) from the Hellenes (or pagan Christians), but also soon gave rise to all manner of friction and controversy between the two groups. And it is such controversies and differences that found their expression both in the Gospels, where we find traces of both sets of views, as well as in other writings of the times.

Whatever the merit of these differences, the fact is that the Ebionites soon lost ground. Both human nature and history were against them. It was human nature

for those that left the parent faith gradually to be merged altogether in the extreme form of the new faith. And, besides, just then the Temple was destroyed, and Jerusalem fell. That event served as an important means of propaganda for the new faith, and helped to consolidate the pagan-Christian forces. It was thus that the Catholic, or non-Jewish, elements of Christianity gained ascendancy over the Jewish, and that Jesus was removed more and more from the sphere and the sympathy of the Jews.

This estrangement, of course, was increased when Christianity was adopted by the Roman Empire, and entered upon a policy of persecution against the Jews. I shall not dwell on the difference that soon arose between the teachings of Jesus and those of the church organized under his name. Others have pointed it out, though the old habit has not yet died of attributing everything that is bad in Christianity to Jew-

ish influence and precedent. But it is easy to see how the outrageous persecution of the Jews on the part of the Christian world necessarily must have made for the neglect of Jesus, and for the creating of antagonism to him, among Jews. Montesquieu, in his great work on the Spirit of the Laws, depicts the effect on the Jews of Christian persecution in the chapter called "A Remonstrance with the Inquisitors of Spain and Portugal." "You want us to become Christians," he makes the Jews say, "but you do not want to be Christians yourselves. But if you do not want to be Christian, be at least human." Robert Browning satirizes the unchristian efforts to convert the Jews in his grotesque poem, "Holy-Cross Day." The more remarkable is the fact that even in the middle ages Jewish teachers were not wanting who, with Maimonides, pointed out the merits of Christianity as a divine factor in spreading the ideals of Religion and Morality in the world.

No student of the words of Jesus can possibly hold him responsible for such application or construction of his utterances as led to the excision of his name from Jewish history. Surely, his aim was to the contrary effect. He spoke of himself as part of the Jewish people, as sent to the,m as devoted to them. Nor did he — while speaking of himself as he did — arrogate any powers in heaven or on earth that others might not attain. Even to his favorite disciples he could not, nor would, promise any special honors in the Kingdom of God.

"And there come near unto him James and John, the sons of Zebedee, saying unto him, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We are

able. And Jesus said unto them, the cup that I drink ye shall drink; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: but to sit on my right hand or on my left hand is not mine to give: but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared." (*Mark* 10: 35–40.)

When we think of what doctrines were founded on the life and the words of Jesus subsequently, and to what treatment of the Jews the religion named after him lent itself, we can understand why so little attention was paid to Jesus in the course of Jewish history.

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THE MODERN JEWISH ATTITUDE TO JESUS

THE attitude of the modern Jew to Jesus is a subject of absorbing interest. Just because for many years there has been silence and estrangement, one wants to know what is the present-day attitude.

As a matter of fact, the interest of Jews in Jesus was never dead. How could they fail to have such an interest in one who had sprung from their own midst and had become the most dominant personality in history? An illustration is offered by the legends about Jesus that sprang up among the Jews and were embodied in an apocryphal biography. This biography enjoyed considerable popularity throughout the Middle Ages and down to modern times, while its origin goes back

to antiquity, perhaps to the third or fourth century. Jewish curiosity about Jesus, however, was thwarted and directed into hostile channels by those untoward conditions which were responsible for the gradual elimination of Jesus from the history of his own people: on the one hand, by the ideas about Jesus that were taken over from non-Jewish sources and finally triumphed over the Jewish ideas; and on the other, by the persecution of the Jews on the part of the people that called themselves followers of Jesus. It was thus that the Jews' natural interest in Jesus was either suppressed or misdirected.

One of the benefits of the modern age has lain in bringing people of different races and faiths closer together. The old barriers have been lowered, if not removed, and men have come to feel that the chief glory and beauty of life lies not in polemics, but in appreciation — not in antagonism, but in sympathy. Though Religion has always

been represented as men's relation to God, their Father, and as the bond binding men together, it is only recently that men have begun to feel the tragic disparity between religious profession and the facts of human strife and antagonism, particularly when the latter are carried on in the name of Religion. This new realization, which has gone hand in hand with the latter-day attention to a comparative study of religions, has led to an appreciation of the ideals common to all religions, and has engendered a larger measure of sympathy and mutual understanding among the followers of various faiths.

The spirit of enlightenment and sympathy has brought about a new era in the relation of the Jews to Jesus. On the one hand, it has caused Christian scholars to revise somewhat the ancient conventional interpretation of the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus, particularly the much-maligned Scribes and Pharisees. On the other hand, it has made

it possible for the Christian believer to listen to a Jew's appraisal of Jesus, and to treat it with respect and without fear of the Jew's eternal damnation, though it differ from his own construction.

Of course, it must be stated that there is no official attitude of modern Jews to Jesus. Neither the Jewish people, nor any considerable part of it, has made any formal declaration on the subject. Such discussion of Jesus as has taken place among modern Jews has been individual and subjective, expressing in each instance personal study and temperament. It is significant, however, that such discussion has formed an important part of modern Jewish thought. Modern writers of Jewish history, such as Graetz and Jost, have not failed to devote attention to Jesus and the rise of Christianity. Similarly, the French Jewish scholars Salvator and Darmstetter. The late Mr. Joseph Jacobs wrote a charming study of Jesus under the title,

"As Others Saw Him," and Mr. Claude G. Montefiore has written both an appreciation of the religious teachings of Jesus and a learned commentary on the Synoptic Gospels. Reform rabbis, from Rabbi Isaac M. Wise down, have often discussed the personality and the teachings of Jesus, for the reason that they have felt the importance of the subject, and the Jew's legitimate interest in it, and not, as some would have it, because of any leaning to sensationalism.

What conclusion, then, may we draw as to the attitude of the modern Jew to Jesus? Perhaps it is well, first of all, to dispose of the question asked most often and most instinctively by Christians, namely, whether the modern Jew accepts Jesus as the Messiah. That Jews, whether modern or ancient, Reform or Orthodox, do not acknowledge the divinity of Jesus, is known to all. It is understood that Jews could not do that,

and still remain Jews, as the very foundation of all Judaism is the unity and the spiritual nature of God, and the Jewish religion has never in the least compromised on this fundamental principle. Only insofar as all humanity is divine, formed in the divine image and with divine possibilities, can the Jew associate the idea of divinity with Jesus. It is commonly understood that the acceptance of Jesus as Divinity is quite out of the question for the Jew. But do the Jews of today, or any part of them, find it possible to accept Jesus as the Messiah?

The answer is that they do not find it possible so to do. And for the reason that the ideas associated in the Jewish mind with the Messiah not only were left unrealized by Jesus, but have remained unfulfilled to this day.

The Messiah-idea has been one of the most valuable elements of Jewish life. Its origin goes back to earliest times, and it has

found an extensive and manifold development in Israel. Nor can any one study the history of this idea without realizing that it underwent numerous changes. When Jesus was born, there was no uniformity of interpretation as to the character of the Messiah and of the messianic kingdom. All this we gather from a study of the idea of the Messiah in Israel. But among all its variations, one thing always remained associated in the Jewish mind with the messianic hope, namely, that the messianic age would be an age of human perfection, of human happiness, of justice and peace, as drawn by Isaiah and other Prophets.

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse,
And a twig shall grow forth out of his roots.
And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord;
And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes,
Neither decide after the hearing of his ears;
But with righteousness shall he judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the land;
And he shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth,
And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins,
And faithfulness the girdle of his reins.
And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
And the cow and the bear shall feed;
Their young ones shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp,
And the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den.
They shall not hurt nor destroy
In all My holy mountain;

For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the
Lord,
As the waters cover the sea."

Every Jewish messianic hope is crowned with that vision. At the time of Jesus, it was often expressed in the literature of the people. Be the Messiah whoever he be — all man or half angel — be his origin earthly or celestial — be his kingdom natural or supernatural, one thing was inseparable from the very idea of the Messiah, namely, that his coming and his reign were to mark the beginning of a period of human perfection and peace.

Such a period not only failed to commence for the Jews with Jesus, but to this day it has not come. The Jews still hope for the messianic age; it still forms the acme of their religious ideal; they still wonder when and how it may come; they still are unable to believe that the Messiah had come.

On the other hand, the modern Jew realizes the ethical power and spiritual beauty of Jesus. In this regard Jesus takes his place among the noble teachers of morality and heroes of faith Israel has produced. It matters not that Jesus dwelt on certain aspects of the spiritual and the ethical life that other Jewish teachers failed to treat with the same stress or the same charm. That constituted the originality of Jesus, and Judaism is not averse to originality.

Every one of Israel's Prophets was original in this sense. While all sought to communicate the same truth, and to serve the same divine end, each of them saw from his own point of view and spoke with an emphasis peculiar to himself: Elijah in terms of God's Unity, Amos of His Justice, Hosea of His Love, and so forth. It would be foolish to call the one or the other the more original.

The precedent of the Prophets was fol-

lowed by later Jewish teachers. There were always different temperaments and tendencies represented among them, often radically opposed to one another. In the very age of Jesus there were the schools of Shammai and of Hillel, the one known for severity in the application of the Law, the other for moderation and flexibility. The synthesis of both schools made for true progress.

Touching the Judaism of Jesus, one must bear this in mind. It does not mean that Jesus was any less in harmony with Judaism because he accented in his teaching the elements of love, of kindness, of brotherliness, of indifference to the material world with its cares and rewards. He thus taught a phase of religion that was part of Judaism, and that has formed the most precious part of it to many a Jewish devotee. Nor is it profitable to debate as to whether those several teachings of Jesus were duplicated or anticipated by other Jewish teachers. The fact is that in

him they found their most harmonious and most complete expression, and that his whole personality, as well as the story of his life, served to impress them most memorably on the mind of the world. The modern Jew, therefore, cannot fail to appreciate Jesus as a religious and ethical teacher.

Of course, the modern Jew deplores the tragic death of Jesus. Yet, if it was not inevitable — which perhaps it was — it certainly is irrevocable. Some say it was inevitable, as part of a universal scheme of salvation. Others believe that insofar as it was inevitable, it was due to the calamitous conditions of the age, which destroyed many a Jewish patriot and leader, and ended by destroying the Jewish state, and also, in no small measure, to Jesus' own character, which made him choose rather to die than try to disentangle the web of circumstance

in which he was caught. Yet, Jesus died as the true idealist is ever ready to die, with his ideals untouched, uncomprehended but uncowed, with a faith in that Spirit of which he ever felt himself a child and a part, whose sway he had sought to spread, and in whose keeping he felt safe. And who knows whether it was not by this very death that Jesus gained his immortality, that he won his ascendancy over human hearts, and an imperishable place in the affections of mankind? The modern Jew would rather Jesus had not died as he did; but, after all, physical death is nothing compared to the eternal life of the spirit, and, as for martyrs, Jewish history has known them without number.

Nor can the modern Jew fail to glory in what Jesus has done for the growth of the ethical and spiritual life of humanity. A great many peculiar notions about the nature and the function of Jesus have accumulated

in the course of the ages. Almost all of them are foreign to the Jewish conception, and no doubt would have been equally foreign to Jesus himself. Jesus was neither a Grecian philosopher nor a mediæval metaphysician, and many of the things attributed to him he probably would have resented even more vigorously than the squabbles of the Scribes and the pedantic punctiliousness of the Pharisees. I have repeatedly referred to the misunderstanding of Jesus which prevailed among his associates, in his audience, and which he suspected and dreaded even in his disciples. It was the cause of his sadness and solitude. It made for his spiritual isolation,— for that spiritual apartness, even while among his companions, of which we get a glimpse in Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper." But is not this tragedy of misunderstanding even increased by the construction which Jesus and his teachings were given in subsequent history?

Yet, these things apart, who can compute all that Jesus has meant to humanity? The love he has inspired, the solace he has given, the good he has engendered, the hope and joy he has kindled — all that is unequalled in human history. Among the great and the good that the human race has produced, none has even approached Jesus in universality of appeal and sway. He has become the most fascinating figure in history. In him is combined what is best and most mysterious and most enchanting in Israel — the eternal people whose child he was. The Jew cannot help glorying in what Jesus thus has meant to the world; nor can he help hoping that Jesus may yet serve as a bond of union between Jew and Christian, once his teaching is better known and the bane of misunderstanding at last is removed from his words and his ideal.

THE END